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FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

NEILL CREAM AND "LOO" HARVEY ON THE EMBANKMENT.

Vol. VI.—No. 69.

THE MURDERS BY THOMAS NEILL CREAM.

"Wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death."

SHAKESPEARE, "Cymbeline," Act I., Sc. 6.

PART II.

WHEN the story of Cream's charge of wholesale murder against young Mr. Harper came out at Bow Street a dramatic incident took place. The police had been obliged to confess that they could find no record of any sudden death of a woman called "Loo" Harvey, and that no information of any kind could be obtained about her. Suddenly a young woman stood up in the body of the court and said:

"I am Loo Harvey."

Neill suddenly turned pale, then recovered himself and looked at her, but there is not the least doubt that he recognised one of his intended victims. Another count was forthwith added to the charge, and the magisterial inquiry proceeded. We will not enter into the evidence given before the magistrate here, as it was all repeated at the trial, suffice it to say that, after many remands, Thomas Cream Neill, or Thomas Neill Cream, was committed to take his trial at the Central Criminal Court on the following counts:

(1) Murder of Matilda Clover.
(2) Murder of Ellen Donworth.
(3) Murder of Alice Marsh.
(4) Murder of Emma Shrivell.
(5) Attempted murder of Louisa Harris (or "Loo" Harvey).
(6) Sending threatening letters to Dr. William Broadbent, Dr. Joseph Harper, and others.

Owing to the necessity of bringing depositions and information from Canada it was not till the 17th of October, 1892, that Thomas Neill Cream was placed in the dock at the Old Bailey.

When Mr. Justice Hawkins took his seat on the bench to try the case the court was crowded, not with the customary frequenters of the Central Criminal Court, but with well-dressed men and women who had come to see the doctor tried for his life.

For the Crown, the Attorney-General (Sir Charles Russell, afterwards Lord Chief Justice of England), was supported by the Hon. Bernard Coleridge, Q.C., Mr. Henry Sutton, and Mr. C. F. Gill, while on behalf of the prisoner briefs were held by Mr. Geoghegan, Mr. Warburton, and Mr. Luxmore Drew. The charge selected on which to try the issue was the murder of Matilda Clover, and if that broke down then the other charges would have been taken in order.

In opening the case for the Crown, the Attorney General gave a brief outline of the facts as we have detailed them, and then called evidence. For the purpose of identifying the prisoner, a licensed victualler named Levi, and the lady book-keeper of Anderton's Hotel, in Fleet Street, where Cream stopped for a few days when first he came to England, were called. Levi swore that he knew Cream in Chicago in the year 1881, where Cream was practising as a doctor under that name. The young lady merely said that Cream had stopped at the hotel from October 5th to 7th, and had then left. After this purely formal evidence began the tale of the crimes.

Elizabeth Masters, a stylishly-dressed young woman, entered the box, and, after admitting that her business was odious to ears polite, told the court that on October 9, 1891, she had an appointment with Neill Cream in the afternoon, at her apartments on the Surrey side of the river. He was late, and she and another young lady of pleasure called May sat at her window looking for him. Presently they saw him coming along the road, but just in front of him was a neatly-dressed girl with an apron on. She recognised the girl by her apron, which she usually wore when out doing shopping. The girl was Matilda Clover. Cream was close behind her, and the girl turned round and smiled at him. Cream nodded and followed her, passing the window where the witness and Miss May were sitting. This was too much for female vanity, and Miss Masters and Miss May went out to see into which house Cream went. They followed quite close to him and saw the couple enter 27, Lambeth Road.

Miss May corroborated the above statement, adding that she had seen Cream several times and knew him well by sight.

A chemist's assistant was next called, who proved that he had sold gelatine capsules capable of containing twelve grains each to Cream, who had represented himself as a doctor. He had also sold him nux vomica in quantities of from one to four ounces at a time. The nux vomica would contain one grain of strychnine to the ounce.

He was followed into the witness-box by the landlady of the house in which Matilda Clover lived. She said that she was known both as Mrs. Phillips and as Mrs. Vowles or Bowles. She mentioned the quarrel with "Fred," which we have spoken about, and then said that on the night of the 20th, or the early morning of the 21st of October, she was awakened by the screams of the girl. She went to the bedroom and found her very ill indeed. She went to try and get a doctor, but had great difficulty in persuading anyone to come. The first two doctors she went to were too busy to come, and at last she had to fetch Mr. Coppin, an assistant to Dr. McCarthy. He prescribed for Clover and went away, but the girl rapidly got worse, and she again went and begged the doctor to come round at once. He did not do so, and while she was away Clover died.

She did not think that there was anything suspicious about her death, as she had been drinking, and thought that the convulsions were caused by drink.

Lucy Rose told the same tale, and also identified Cream as the man who had been with Matilda on the evening of October 20.

Then Mr. Coppin was called. After describing the symptoms as he found them, he admitted that he thought the woman was dying when he went away, yet he did not return when he was called for a second time, but sent instead to Dr. Graham, whose patient the woman really was. He was an unqualified man, and had never previously seen a case of strychnine poisoning.

Dr. Robert Graham stated that he had been attending Clover for some few days for alcoholism. She had been to his dispensary two days before her death. When he was sent for he was engaged, and so referred Mrs. Vowles to Dr. McCarthy. After the death, he obtained the symptoms from Mr. Coppin and from the landlady, and, knowing that the woman drank, had no hesitation in signing a certificate to the effect that death was due to alcoholism and syncope.

"Is not that a very irregular thing to do?" asked the Attorney-General.

"I do not think so; I believe it is often done," replied the witness.

"I suppose you know," remarked Mr. Justice Hawkins, in his most severe tones, "that you were bound to put the truth, and nothing but the truth, in that certificate? You can stand down, sir."

Evidence was then given of the burial and exhumation of the body; and after that Cream's landlady's daughter, Miss Sleaper, was called, and a new fact came to light. It appears that a day or two after Clover's death, while there was not the least suspicion that she had not died from the effects of a drinking bout, Cream had called her and asked her to take a letter to 27, Lambeth Road, where, he said, a young woman who had a child had been poisoned, and he wanted to know how she was. She next spoke of Cream's comments on the murder of Marsh and Shrivell, and said that he had told her that Mr. Harper was responsible for their deaths.

Only one medical expert was required in the cases of Clover, Marsh, and Shrivell, but that expert was Dr. Stevenson. As he always was, he was very precise and very brief, but his brief evidence has sent many a miscreant to the gallows.

"I examined the body of Matilda Clover. I found strychnine in poisonous quantities in the stomach, liver, and brain. All her symptoms point to death by poisoning with strychnine. I analysed the case of medicines taken from Neill Cream. Seven bottles contained strychnine in the form of pills and capsules. Strychnine poisoning will develop in three-quarters of an hour." That was the substance of his evidence, and it was sufficiently weighty for the judge, when he came to sum up to direct the jury to believe every word of it.

A Canadian witness next stepped into the box. He was the traveller, McCulloch, who met Neill in Quebec. He repeated the story, which we have already given, and added that Neill told him that the capsules he showed him were the best for administering the poison with. John Haynes then told the jury about his walk with Neill Cream, and of the charge against Mr. Harper; and, from this point onwards all the charges were included in the evidence, the object being to show the similarity of method in the criminal's doings.

A long string of police officers occupied the witness-box during the greater part of the third day's hearing, and they each told their share of the story which we have set forth in the preceding pages; one little incident alone relieved the monotony of the stereotyped constable's evidence, beginning with the well-known formula: "John Jones, P.C., so and so; I was on duty," etc.

Inspector Tonbridge, of the Criminal Investigation Department, in the course of his evidence, mentioned the letter written to Dr. Broadbent.

"What steps did the police take?" asked the judge.

"None, my lord."

"What! Do you mean to tell me that when you received a letter stating that a woman who died suddenly in a certain house had been poisoned, you did not make inquiries as to how she died? I am surprised!"

"Nothing was done, my lord."

"That will do. My surprise still remains," snapped out Sir Henry Hawkins.

Louise Sabbatini, to whom Neill Cream was engaged, was the next witness. She told the jury how Neill and she met and became engaged. On his return from Canada he had coaxed her to write certain letters at his dictation. When she saw that they referred to a murder, she asked him how he knew about it. He replied that he had a great friend, who was an American detective, and that he had told him all about it. Knowing Dr. Harper,

Saw the couple enter.

he was unwilling to bring disgrace on his family, but that he was bound to do in the interests of justice. At the same time, he said that his friend, who would not be paid for the work he had done, was naturally anxious to make a little money out of the information. The letters ran as follows:

"London, May 2, 1892.

"To Coroner Wyatt, St. Thomas's Hospital, London.

DEAR SIR,—Will you please give the enclosed letter to the foreman of the Coroner's Jury on the inquest on Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell?—Yours respectfully,

"WM. H. MURRAY."

The next ran:

"London, May 2, 1892.

"To the Foreman of the Coroner's Jury in the cases of Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to inform you that one of my operators has positive proof that Walter Harper, a medical student of St. Thomas's Hospital, and a son of

Dr. Harper, of Bear Street, Barnstaple, is responsible for the deaths of Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell, he having poisoned the girls with strychnine. That proof you can have on paying my bill for services to George Clarke, detective, 20, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, to whom I will give the proof on his paying my bill.—Yours respectfully, "WM. H. MURRAY."

And to Clarke she wrote for Cream:

"London, May 4, 1892.

"To George Clarke, Esq., Detective, 20, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, London.

"DEAR SIR,—If Mr. Wyatt, Coroner, calls on you in regard to the murders of Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell, you can tell him that you will give positive proof to him that W. H. Harper, student of St. Thomas's Hospital, and son of Dr. Harper, of Bear Street, Barnstaple, poisoned the girls with strychnine, provided the coroner will pay you well for your services. Proof of this will be forthcoming. I will write you again in a few days.—Yours respectfully, "WM. H. MURRAY."

Having sworn to the letters, Miss Sabbatini stood down.

Then came the sensation of the trial. "Loo" Harvey, who had very narrowly escaped death at the hands of the prisoner, and of whose death the prisoner had felt certain, was called to give evidence. She said that she had met the prisoner at a Music Hall, and had had a little conversation with him. They left the hall and went to a public-house, where they had a glass of wine each. He had questioned her, and found out that she was not well, and suspected that she was in trouble, so he arranged to meet her on the following evening. She met him at the same place, and then he said that he would not give her the medicine there but that if she would go down to the Embankment to a spot he indicated, he would follow her and give her the medicine.

She went out of the hall and down on to the Embankment, and in a few minutes the prisoner joined her. He handed her two "long pills," which contained some whitish substance, and told her to put them one at a time into her mouth and swallow them without biting them. She took the pills, and then thought that she would not swallow them; so she passed them from one hand to the other, which she put behind her back. Then she pretended to take the pills as he directed her, but in reality dropped them on the ground.

Cream was very anxious to see if she had swallowed them, and made her open both her hands to see if they were empty. He then said she would soon be much better, and walked away rapidly.

Her real name was Louisa Harris, and the police had not been able to find her at the address which Neill had given to Haynes, as she had given him a false address on purpose. She lived at No. 44, and not at 55. She could not tell what impelled her to refuse the medicine at the last moment, but she was afraid to annoy him by not taking it, so pretended to swallow the pills. "Long pills" were capsules. When shown a capsule similar to those which Neill had shown to McCulloch, she declared that those were the kind of "long pills" which he had given to her.

The deaths of Donworth, Marsh, and Shrivell were formally proved by the police and hospital attendants, and while Dr. Kellock swore to the presence of a poisonous quantity of strychnine in the body of the first-named, Dr. Stevenson made the same statement with regard to the last two. That ended the case for the Crown.

Mr. Geoghegan's task of defending Cream was a most difficult one. He had not a single witness to call, nor had he anything more than a suggestion to make about the crimes themselves. Neill Cream himself admitted writing the letters, and the only thing which could be said was that there was no motive shown for the murders.

With all an Irishman's eloquence, Mr. Geoghegan spoke for the whole of the afternoon of the fourth day on behalf of his client. Was it not possible, he asked, that Clover, being a delicate girl and addicted to drink, in a moment of insanity, or disgusted with the life of shame which she was leading, had taken poison? His client admitted writing the letters, but as a medical man he might have known from the symptoms that Clover had died from poison, and then yielded to the temptation to make some money out of his discovery. There was absolutely no reason why he should take the girl's life. Even if his intercourse with her was discovered, he was not known in England and could easily have returned to Canada. He admitted that Cream had done wrong in attempting to blackmail people, but that was not a crime calling for death as the penalty. On the whole, he contended that Cream was entitled to the benefit of the doubt.

It was late in the day when the counsel concluded his plea for Cream's life, and Mr. Justice Hawkins adjourned the court till the following day.

"How," asked the Judge, "did the prisoner know that?"

When Cream appeared in the dock for the fifth and last time, it was evident that he realised the seriousness of his position. As on the opening day, the court was crowded, but this time there were more officials, whose positions gave them a right to be present to the exclusion of the general public, to be seen.

Shortly before eleven Mr. Justice Hawkins took his seat on the bench, and, after giving directions that no one was to enter or leave the court-room till he had finished his charge to the jury, commenced to sum up the case in a speech which is still cited as one of the most masterly analyses of a lengthy case ever heard in a court of justice. For three hours exactly Mr. Justice Hawkins spoke to the jury. Space does not permit of our giving this judicial gem in extenso, but we will indicate the points on which the judge laid stress.

After impressing the jury that the decision of this case rested with them, the learned judge started to review the evidence. He first dwelt on the death of Matilda Clover, how she had been in the company of the prisoner on the evening preceding her death; how in the watches

of the night her screams had aroused the household, who regarded her piteous state as the result of drink, but, becoming alarmed, sent for a doctor, and an unqualified man attended.

"Although Dr. Coppin left the poor creature, as he said, dying," went on Sir Henry, in measured terms, "and was urged to visit her at eight, neither he nor Dr. Graham came, and she succumbed at a quarter to nine. I hope that these gentlemen, for the sake of their own feelings, had each something like a legitimate excuse for not attending this poor unfortunate girl in her last moments."

Everybody believed that Matilda Clover died from the effects of delirium tremens, yet on November 28 the prisoner wrote to Dr. Broadbent stating that Clover died from strychnine poisoning.

"How," asked the judge, "did the prisoner know that? Why did he make that statement, which has since been proved to be true?" That point touched Cream, who shivered slightly and looked with a fixed stare at the blank wall behind the jury.

The letter to Dr. Harper he would read to them, as it was of great importance. It ran as follows:

"London, April 25, 1892.

"Dr. Harper, Barnstaple.

"DEAR SIR,—I am writing to inform you that one of my operators has indisputable evidence that your son, W. H. Harper, a medical student, of St. Thomas's Hospital, poisoned two girls named Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell on the 12th instant, and that I am willing to give you the said evidence (so as you can suppress it) for the sum of £1,500 sterling. The evidence in my hands is strong enough to convict and hang your son, but I shall give it to you for £1,500 sterling, or sell it to the police for the same amount. The publication of the evidence will ruin you and your family for ever, and that you know as well as I do. To show you that what I am writing is true I am willing to send you a copy of the evidence against your son, so that when you read it you will need no one to tell you that it will convict your son. Answer my letter at once through the columns of the London 'Daily Chronicle' as follows: 'W. H. M. will pay you for your services.—Dr. H.' After I see this in paper I will communicate with you again. As I said before, I am perfectly willing to satisfy you that I have strong evidence against your son by giving you a copy of it before you pay me a penny. If you do not answer it at once I am going to give evidence to the coroner at once.—Yours respectfully,

"W. H. MURRAY."

NEILL CREAM SENTENCED TO DEATH AT THE OLD BAILEY.

Passing from the evidence relating to the death of Clover, his lordship commented on the death of Donworth. Here again there was a woman of the "unfortunate class" done to death by strychnine poisoning. In this case, as in all the others, a threatening letters was sent to a prominent person asking for money—for hush money. Then there was the case of "Loo" Harvey. The prisoner had actually told the witness Haynes, and subsequently repeated the statement to McIntyre, that the woman had been poisoned, and from the evidence it appeared that he had given her some medicine which she had not taken, and she had been before them in that court.

What did they think of the conversation with McCulloch in the hotel at Quebec? Was it to be believed or not? The prisoner goes away to Canada, and when he returns there is another couple of deaths, those of Marsh and Shrivell, and following closely on the heels of these are letters to the coroner, the foreman of the jury, a private detective, and to Dr. Harper accusing the last-named gentleman's son of committing the murders.

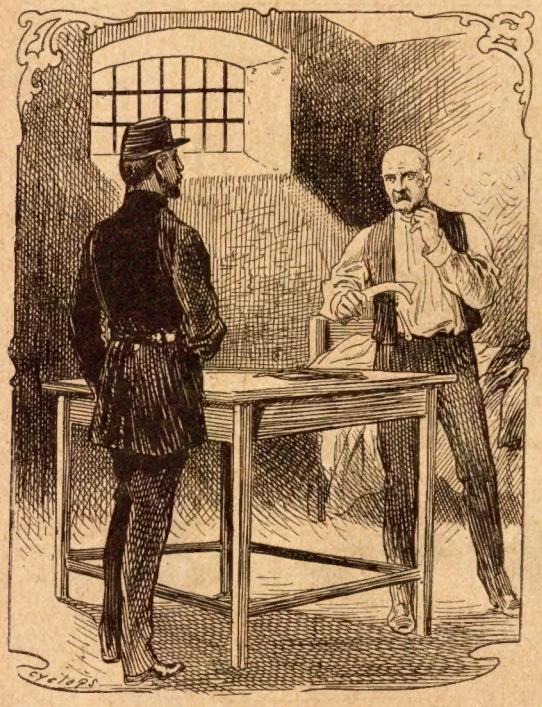
That the prisoner was acquainted with the girls Marsh and Shrivell there could be no doubt, for a piece of paper was found in his trousers pocket with their address upon it. The jury must also consider the conduct of the man while under supervision and his conversation with the police-officer, McIntyre.

Taking all these facts as a whole, and bearing in mind that the letter to Dr. Broadbent, stating that Clover had been poisoned, was written when there was not the least

reason to suppose that the girl had died other than an ordinary death, if they were of the opinion that strychnine had been administered to the poor girl—and of this he thought there could be no doubt—was that strychnine given to her by the prisoner at the bar? If so, it was their duty to say so without hesitation; but if they had the least doubt about the matter, then they must give the prisoner the benefit of that doubt. Thus Sir Henry Hawkins dismissed the jury to their duties.

It was a quarter to two when the jury retired to decide the question of life or death, and in exactly ten minutes they returned, having taken the judge's hint to "do their duty without hesitation" to heart. Neill Cream was brought back, and the distinguished spectators crowded into the little court-room in a hurry, for few had imagined that the jury would have taken such a short time over their deliberations. First the names of the jurymen were called over; then came the following dialogue:

Clerk of Arraigns: "Gentlemen of the Jury, have you agreed upon your verdict?"



"I would not put that on this morning!"

Foreman: "We have."

Clerk of Arraigns: "Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty of the murder of Matilda Clover?"

Foreman: "Guilty."

On this there was some slight applause in court, and the ushers shouted "Silence! silence!" The clerk turned to Cream, and asked:

"Prisoner at the bar, you stand convicted of the crime of wilful murder. Have you anything to say why the court should not give you judgment to die according to law?"

The convicted murderer shook his head, and faintly murmured, "No."

Silence was again proclaimed, and one or two warders silently stepped into the dock and stood behind Cream, who was leaning his right arm on the front of the dock, while the curtains behind the judge's chair parted and the Chaplain of Newgate entered in his full robes and took his stand beside the Seat of Judgment.

Mr. Justice Hawkins took the square of black velvet, which is called commonly the "Black Cap," and, addressing Cream by the first of the names under which he had been indicted, said very impressively:

"Thomas Neill, the jury, after having listened with the most patient attention to the evidence that has been offered against you for this most terrible crime, and having paid all attention to the most able arguments and the very eloquent speech which your learned counsel addressed to them on your behalf, have felt it their bounden duty to find you guilty of the crime of wilful murder—a murder so diabolical in its character, fraught with so much cold-blooded cruelty, that one dare hardly trust oneself to speak of the details of your wickedness.

"What could have actuated you to take life in that cruel way with so much torture to that poor creature, who could not have offended you, I know not. What motive actuated you I know not; but I know your cruelty towards her, and the crime that you have committed is, to my mind, unparalleled in atrocity. For the crime of which you have been convicted our law knows but one penalty—the penalty of death. That sentence I must now pronounce upon you in accordance with my duty. I will add but one word more, to beseech you during the short time of life that remains to you to remember that when you descend the steps of the spot where you now stand, this world will be no more for you, and to endeavour to seek your peace with Almighty God. Pray Him to pardon you for your great sin. He alone can pardon you for it.

"The crime which you have committed, I have already said, can only be expiated by your death. I proceed, therefore, to pass upon you the dread sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken from hence to the place whence you came, and from thence to a lawful place of execution, and that there you be hanged by your neck until you be dead, and when you are dead your body shall be buried within the precincts of that prison within the walls of which you shall have been confined last before the execution of this judgment upon you. And may the Lord have mercy upon your soul." To which the chaplain responded, "Amen." The prisoner gave one hurried look round the court, with his eyes rolling in a ghastly fashion, and was then hurried off by the warders who were in the dock.

Strenuous efforts were made to obtain a commutation of the sentence, on the plea that Neill Cream was insane. The Home Secretary delayed the execution for a week pending the arrival of certain affidavits from America, but when they arrived they were found to be nothing more than the expressions of opinion on the part of his sister-in-law and of his father's executor to the effect that they believed him to be of unsound mind. A special meeting at which the judge and counsel were present was held at the Home Office, and for a whole morning Cream's fate was debated, but not the slightest reason could be found why the law should not take its ordinary course. So his death warrant was signed.

Weeks pass along rapidly enough to those in the world; how swiftly must the minutes fly to one who knows that each tick of the clock brings him nearer to an ignominious death on the scaffold! At last the 14th of November began to draw to a close, and Cream knew that he would never see the setting of another sun. He had an interview with his solicitor late that evening, when he made his will, and then the full horror of his position dawned on him. His eyes rolled, and he was restless, shifting from place to place; now lying down, now sitting up, but rest would not come. Then he paced the cell for an hour, trying to tire himself out, and so compel sleep to visit him. But all was in vain. During the whole night he hardly slept for more than a moment or two, and when he did his rest was broken by dreams so that he woke with a start, only to realise that more of the precious minutes had sped.

At six o'clock on November 15 the convict rose and commenced to dress. As he was finishing his toilet he picked up his collar and commenced to put it on. "I would not put that on this morning if I were you," re-

marked the senior warder gently. Neill started, looked at the collar for a moment, and then flung it down on the table.

Almost immediately after this he had breakfast brought to him, but though the warders kindly asked him to eat he would touch nothing. Then the chaplain came in to see him. The convict did not hear his footsteps approaching, and when the door was opened gave a sigh of relief, as if he had been expecting other officials. He had softened a good deal towards the chaplain, or ordinary, as he is termed, in the last few days, and now received him with something like gratitude. The ordinary was wearing his surplice, which must have reminded Cream of the service of which he was so soon to hear the beginning, but never the end. The Rev. Mr. Merrick tried to console the doomed man and entreated him to admit his guilt, but Neill would not listen to a word which exhorted him to confession of his dreadful crime.

At three minutes to nine the heavy door swung upon its hinges and the Governor of Newgate, Colonel Milman, and Mr. Deputy Sheriff Metcalf entered the cell, followed by Billington, the hangman, whose arms were full of straps. Cream rose from the stool on which he was sitting and for an instant steadied himself against the edge of the table, then he braced himself up for the last ordeal.

"Neill, is there anything you would like to say, for now is the time?" asked Mr. Metcalf.

"No, sir," replied Neill doggedly, then, remembering that he would have no more chance of speaking on earth, continued in a more gracious tone, "except to thank everyone for their great kindness to me. I have to thank you especially, Mr. Governor, as you have all made the last two days amongst the happiest of my life; I have been so kindly treated by the governor, the chaplain, and all the officials." While he was thus speaking the hangman was engaged in fastening his arms. No belt, such as is usually used, was made use of, but the convict's arms were fastened behind him with a strap and another smaller strap encircled his wrists, binding them together.

At once the procession to the gallows formed. The prison was full of gloom, as if in mourning, and Newgate officials say that never was an execution carried out in the old gaol under such awfully impressive circumstances. The semi-darkness of the corridors was only faintly dispelled by the flickering of a few gas jets.

First came the chief warder, Scott, then the chaplain, reading slowly the opening sentences of the Service for the Burial of the Dead. He was followed by Neill Cream, hatless and collarless, with his arms bound. The doomed man was ashen pale, and his eyes rolled and twitched under the terrible mental strain. He was accompanied by two warders, who held his arms, but did not support him, as he walked firmly to his fate. Almost on his heels walked the executioner, Billington, fumbling in his pocket for the long cap with which to shut out Cream's last view of the world. Then came the governor, the deputy sheriff, and four more warders. The clock had not struck nine when the procession left the cell, and as the ordinary read the service his voice was drowned from time to time

NEILL CREAM ON THE WAY TO THE SCAFFOLD.

by the tolling of the prison bell—the passing knell of a living man!

Only a few seconds elapsed before the procession entered the door, in the wall of the corridor, leading into the execution shed. Neill Cream at once took his stand on the drop beside the dangling noose, and the officials ranged themselves round the walls. Billington lost no time. He quickly adjusted the fatal rope and drew the white cap over the convict's face. Then he stooped down and strapped Cream's legs together at the ankles. That done, he stealthily stepped off the drop, and the warders who had assisted followed. The chaplain changed the verse he was reading at once to the one which says: "In the midst of life we are in death." At that moment Billington drew the lever which operated the drop, and Neill Cream, murderer of fallen women, hung from the ancient beam, a corpse.

Instantly the prison doctor, who had awaited the arrival of the procession in the shed, went down into the pit and pronounced life extinct. The chaplain finished his verse, and from outside came the low roar of the

crowd, who rejoiced that justice had been done on one of the greatest scoundrels of the age. Then the officials retired, and for an hour the body of the murderer hung, lifeless, from the gallows on which many miscreants had expiated their crimes, but none of whom deserved their fate more richly than he did.

At eleven o'clock that morning a coroner's inquest was held on the body of the executed man. The corpse was lying across the drop in a plain shell. It was dressed in the dark clothes which the convict had worn at his trial. Beyond the indentation caused by the rope, there was nothing to indicate that Neill Cream had met a violent death. After the usual formal evidence had been given, a verdict was returned that "Thomas Neill, or Thomas Neill Cream, had met his death by hanging, in accordance with the sentence of the law passed on him on October the 21st previously." The moment the inquest was over, the coffin was filled up with quicklime and buried in the Murderers' Graveyard, a corridor leading from Newgate to the Old Bailey.

To his dying day, Billington the hangman declared that Neill Cream was "Jack the Ripper," and rests his assertion on the belief that just as he was drawing the bolt, he heard Cream murmur, "I am Jack——" the rest of the sentence being drowned by the thud of his falling body. Be this as it may, with the arrest of Cream, the "Jack the Ripper" murders ceased. On the other hand, the man who was seen on the only occasion when a glimpse was caught of the murderer in no way resembled Neill in build or height, and the police were convinced that they had traced the outrages to a mad doctor, who was found drowned in the Thames a month after the last of the mysterious murders.

Was Neill Cream mad? That is a question which has puzzled criminologists for a very long time. His actions were hardly those of a sane man at times, and there appears to have been no motive for his crimes. Little can be drawn from his foolish admissions which ultimately led to his capture, for all criminals make mistakes; but his cunning was almost the cunning of a madman. If he was mad, he was too dangerous to live; if sane, the world was well rid of a consummate scoundrel.

"Just One More Word."

MR. SERJEANT SHEE, the able counsellor who defended Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner, was once defending a man for highway robbery, and there was really no defence whatever to be made. The prosecuting counsel was very tedious, and, professing to have discovered fresh evidence, which was quite unnecessary, occupied a deal of the court's time in the process of reviewing and commenting on this evidence. The judge once or twice called his attention to the fact that he was wasting the time of both judge and jury, when counsel said, "I beg your lordship to allow me to add just one word." He was permitted to continue, and used a good many empty words, keeping the court for fully half an hour. Shee was expected to make a long and elaborate reply in defence of his client, but he merely said: "I should have replied if my learned friend had added just 'that one word,' which, no doubt, would have contained all his new matter, as well as the old, but as he did not add it, I have nothing to answer."

All in court thought this an admirable apology for holding his tongue, and it benefited his client greatly, inasmuch as the jury found him "Not Guilty," to the surprise of judge, counsel, prisoner, and everyone else except the jury.

The Judge Rebuked.

MR. DUNNING was once arguing a case before Lord Mansfield, who seemed immersed in the pages of a newspaper, it being his habit to read on the bench, though he was ever completely master of all the facts, and all the law, of every case that came before him. On the occasion in question Mr. Dunning thought he would administer a rebuke to the judge for his apparent inattention, and in the middle of his speech suddenly stopped, whereupon his lordship said, "Pray go on, Mr. Dunning." The lawyer paused, and significantly answered, "I fear, my lord, that I am interrupting your lordship's more important occupations. I will gladly wait until your lordship finds leisure to attend to my client and his humble counsel." Lord Mansfield took the hint, nodded his head, and put the paper away.

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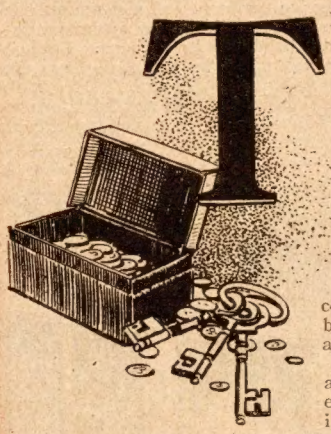
OPENING CHAPTERS IN No. 71.

THE

Strange Case of Robert Palin

His Dramatic Arrest for the Murder of Mrs. Jane Beazley, and Remarkable Trial. His Acquittal.

Sir Tobias: And if not there, where were you, sirrah?
Sorrel: Sir, I did pass a pleasant evening at mine inn.
—MADDISON, "The Rake Reformed" (1765).



THE village of Cudham, situated four miles from Bromley, is in the county of Kent, near the Surrey border. It is an afternoon's walk, too, from Croydon, and the writer proceeded there some few weeks since, in pursuit of information respecting a weird crime committed in the neighbourhood many years ago.

Cudham is a retired and rural parish, and even in these days the investigating stranger is likely to be an object of some suspicion to the honest and homely villagers of such spots as these. But a more confiding yokel was enterprising enough to conduct me down the road leading from Cudham to Westerham, and halfway between these two villages I observed some rather ancient cottages, with clover fields at the back and the remains of a thick wood in front of them. The last of these cottages—an innocent-looking dwelling enough—was once the scene of a murder as brutal and ferocious as any in the history of crime.

I do not know what conclusion my readers will form when I have put them in possession of all the facts of this most curious and unusual case, but I can say that for my part I entertain very little doubt as to the identity of the individual who killed Mrs. Beazley and all but killed her aged mother-in-law at the same time. Robert Palin was tried for the crime, and a more or less enlightened jury of his fellow-countrymen found him not guilty; but I have reason to believe that his escape was a very narrow one, and that a majority of those with whom his fate rested were strongly opposed to the verdict. Their deliberation was long and anxious. Three of the jurymen were inclined to accept as true the prisoner's own statement as to his whereabouts on the night of the crime, and the others finally agreed that, as the doubt existed, the accused should be given the benefit of it. Hence a verdict which occasioned much surprise and speculation at the time, and which, after all these years, it is extremely difficult to reconcile with the evidence. Alive or dead, however, Palin must be given the credit of an acquittal, even if we find it hard to believe him innocent in our inmost hearts.

At Cudham, in the year 1855, resided a farm-labourer of the name of George Beazley. His cottage was the last of a row facing the little wood on the road to Westerham, and was distant some thirty-five yards from its nearest neighbour. The dwelling consisted of three rooms, all of which faced the road, and at the back was a pleasant flower and vegetable garden, separated from an adjoining meadow by a hedge. The inmates of this cottage, beside Beazley himself, were his wife, Jane Beazley, aged 40, his mother, aged 80 years, and his son, a fine, strapping young fellow of 19. The mother was a strong, healthy woman for her years, and was still able to do a certain amount of work in the fields, although she was maintained by her son, who allowed her to accumulate her small savings, which she kept in a box in her room. She had been nurse in the family of Mr. Christie, the well-known hatter, who had a small estate in the neighbourhood, and Beazley and his son were both employed thereon.

On the morning of Saturday, August 25, 1855—a day long remembered in the district—Beazley, senior, rose about four, and at from four-thirty to five o'clock quitted his house, in order to proceed to his work, which was situated about three-quarters of a mile away. His son followed him about a quarter of an hour later, and left his mother asleep in bed and his grandmother in her own room. He did not lock the front door, which led direct to the kitchen, after him, but left it on the latch, with the key inside. It was a beautiful summer morning, and the countryside was at its brightest and its best. Who could conjure up a horrible vision of grim, relentless murder on such a lovely morn? Who but a brute could think of such a deed at such a placid spot, on such a glorious day?

The male Beazleys never returned to dinner, which was provided for them by their generous employer, so that it was close upon half-past seven in the evening when the elder man got back to his home. To his surprise, he found the cottage locked up, the windows closed, and the curtains in the same state that he had left them. While he stood wondering what this and the ominous silence about the place might mean, his son joined him, and eventually they broke a window near the door and entered the kitchen. Nothing here had in any way been disturbed, although Mr. Beazley noticed that a pound of cheese, which he had left upon the table, had disappeared. By this time it was nearly dark, and he and his son went into the wife's room, the former asking her why she had gone to bed so soon. Receiving no reply, he felt in bed for her in the dark, and in doing so put his hand in what proved to be, on lighting a candle, a pool of blood. His wife was completely covered with the bedclothes, and, on removing them, he encountered a truly frightful spectacle. Her head and face were so fearfully beaten, bruised, and lacerated as to render it almost impossible to recognise any human countenance at all, and she had obviously been dead for a good many hours. Near at hand lay a pair of tongs—dread implement of death in many murders—which were covered with blood and human hair.

Groans were now heard proceeding from the adjoining room, and when the affrighted son and father entered this apartment they were further appalled to see the old woman sitting on the bed, covered with blood, and her features wearing an expression of fear and horror. It was seen that part of her skull had been broken in, that her shoulders were seriously hurt, her nose smashed, and her hands very much bruised. She was in a state of the utmost excitement, appearing to believe that some man was even now hidden beneath her bed, and it was with great difficulty and after many hours that she was quieted. Her ultimate recovery was most marvellous, for she was terribly battered, and her nervous system greatly affected.

An alarm was speedily given, the still living woman removed to the house of a neighbour, and the police and a doctor sent for. Important discoveries were made. The place was thoroughly searched, and it was ascertained that plunder had been the motive for the dastardly outrage. The boxes in both bedrooms and a chest had been forced open and the things thrown out. The pocket of the dead woman's gown, in which she kept her money, was quite empty, and a suit of clothes—coat, vest, and trousers—belonging to young Beazley had been taken away. A small money-box was found on the wife's bed, from which a piece had been cut and the contents extracted. In the privy at the back of the cottage was found the key of the front door, and in one spot the hedge had been trampled down, as if some person had hastily made his escape across it to the meadow and clover field beyond.

Information of the murder soon leaked out, and the news of it spread far and wide. The horrid affair created widespread consternation, and a whole host of police was soon engaged in an endeavour to secure the barbarous perpetrator. A strong clue was soon forthcoming. Three or four men were mowing clover in a field close by the cottage early on the morning of the murder. These persons came forward to say that they had seen a man coming from the cottage at about 6 a.m., and that when he came within 30 or 40 yards of them they hailed him, but elicited no response. The louder they shouted, the faster the individual ran; but, as he kept turning round to watch their movements, they had several opportunities of observing his features, and all were confident that they would know him again. He was described as being from 20 to 25 years of age, about 5 feet 6½ inches in height, dressed in a dark shooting-coat, trousers, and black hat, and he carried a bundle under his arm. Without a doubt that man was the murderer of Mrs. Jane Beazley.

Now, this description answered very exactly to a young man named Robert Palin—whom the "Times" in its first accounts of the case persistently referred to as "Peelings,"

mainly, I think, because that did not happen to be his name! What do we know of this Palin? Let us see.

He was by trade a shoemaker, with, however, a rather unfortunate habit of combining the business of burglary with the more conventional if less hazardous trade. At his trial he was officially described as being 22 years old; but, though he presented a remarkably youthful appearance, I have reason to believe that he was older than that. He was a returned transport, and had been awarded ten years for burglary at the same Sessions where he was ultimately tried for murder; but, for some occult reason, he had only served four years of his term, and had been discharged on ticket-of-leave just a month before the murder. Suspicion was divided between this person and another desperado of the name of Clarke, for whom the police searched long and arduously, to ascertain eventually that, though he was presumably capable of such a deed, he did not happen to have done it, for he was a hundred miles away from the spot at the time.

Such relatives as Palin had resided at a village called Copthorne, which is not, I understand, a great distance from Croydon, or, for that matter, from Cudham, and he was pretty well known in the district. It transpired that he disappeared after this murder was committed, and a zealous detective went in search of him, disguised as a tramp, and early in September ran him to earth at Whitfield, in Gloucestershire, and removed him to Bromley, where he appeared, charged with the crime, before the magistrates.

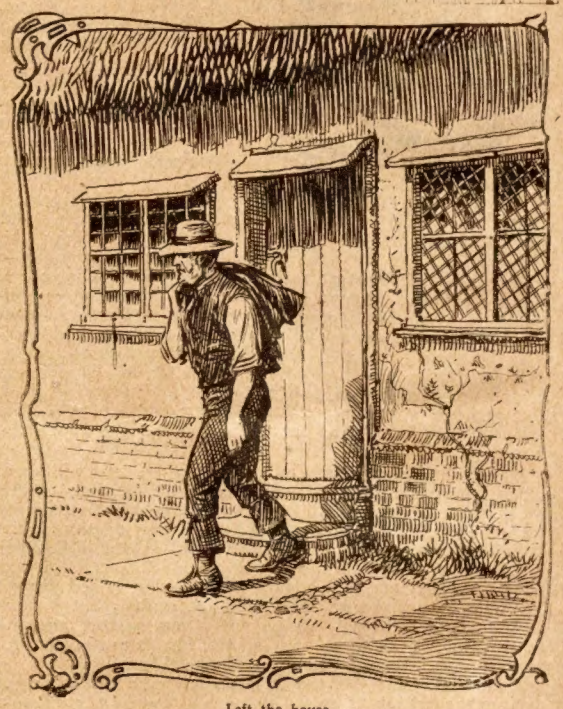
The interest of the case now shifts to the trial of Robert Palin, and I shall proceed to give an analysis of the proceedings, so that my readers can form their own judgment as to his guilt or innocence. The investigation took place at Maidstone, on Thursday, December 20, and Friday, December 21, 1855, and the prosecution was conducted by Mr. Clark and Mr. Barrow. The prisoner was at that time undefended, but at the request of the learned judge, Mr. Denman—a relative of the Lord Chief Justice—consented to act for him, and acquitted himself very well of his task. Palin was a slight, young-looking man, with no moustache or whisker, and something of a squint. He appeared quite calm.

The first witness was George Beazley, who related how he had left his wife and mother in their respective beds, and how he had returned at some time after seven in the evening. He heard groans issuing from his mother's room before he entered the cottage, and when he got in he asked her what was the matter, and she replied that she did not know. He had never seen the money-box found on the bed in the house before, and was unaware that his wife possessed it. Her work-box and the front-door key were afterwards found in the privy at the rear of the cottage. In cross-examination, he stated that he had originally suspected the man Clarke, who had been taken into custody and afterwards discharged.

Mr. Edwards, a surgeon living at Keston, went to the cottage on the evening of August 25, and saw the body of Mrs. Beazley, which was not rigid, though cold, death having taken place at least twelve hours previously. The post-mortem examination revealed that the skull had been fractured in several places and that it was depressed on the right side to the very centre of the brain. At least eight or nine blows had been struck with great violence, and the nose was broken and the ears smashed. Death was instantaneous after the infliction of these blows. The elder woman was sensible, but very excited. He had attended her ever since, and her faculties, he declared, were now perfect. (I may remark here that the old woman was doubtless asleep when attacked, for she was never able to give any account of the onslaught, and had, therefore, no evidence of any value to offer, though it is odd that she was not examined in court.) In cross-examination the doctor said that there was a wound upon the cheek of deceased which could not have been inflicted by such a weapon as a pair of tongs. Her head had moved during the shower of blows, but not the body, and she, too, was probably asleep when attacked.

Robert Jackson said: "I live at Cudham. On August 25, in the morning, I was mowing oats in a field at the back of Beazley's cottage, and at 6.20 saw a man run across a clover field close by us. He had a bundle under his left arm, and prisoner is the man. I called out, 'Hulloa! What are you doing in that field of clover? You have no business there, I know.' He made no answer, but stopped for a moment, and then ran on in a different direction. He kept looking back at us till he got out of sight. He went into the wood." In cross-examination, witness admitted that the man was many yards off, but he was quite sure Palin was the man, though he was not, perhaps, quite so positive on the point before he heard that Beazley's clothing had been found in his possession. William Crane was equally positive. He added that the man in question was wearing a peculiar-shaped hat, and when a hat was handed to the prisoner in court and the latter tried it on, the witness said triumphantly, with no sound of doubt in his voice, "That's him, right enough!" Jesse Tremaine corroborated, but it must be admitted that none of these three very important witnesses were quite so certain as to the identity of the man they had seen at the magisterial investigation as they were now, and the counsel for the defence made much of that fact.

James Hindley, superintendent of police for West Kent, stationed at Seven Oaks, stated that he received information of the event at 11.10 p.m. on August 25, and on the following morning he went over to Croydon, and met the prisoner about 7 a.m. He was wearing a hat similar to the one produced in court, and had a bundle under his arm. The witness stopped him and asked where he had come from that morning, to which he replied, "Copthorne." He might have come that distance if, as he said, he had left the latter place at two. He added that he had been staying with his grandmother for the last three weeks, a statement which



Left the house.

was afterwards proved to be untrue. The witness searched his bundle, and found that it contained a jacket, vest, and trousers; but, as they did not appear to be those Mr. Beazley had lost, he allowed the prisoner to proceed, to look, as he said, for work in London. (It cannot be too emphatically impressed upon the reader that these articles of clothing were those the murderer had removed from the cottage, and Palin's explanation of how he became possessed of them was very unsatisfactory. This witness admitted that the prisoner voluntarily stated what was in the bundle, and then opened it for his inspection.)

James Johnson, a constable of the R Division, said that from information received he went in the beginning of September to Whitfield, in Gloucestershire, and on September 4 arrested Palin at the house of a man named Wheeler. It was then one o'clock in the morning, and the prisoner was upstairs in bed. He was known to the witness, who said, "Robert, I want you for that murder at Cudham." He became very excited, but consented to dress and to go quietly with the officer. The latter noticed some clothes on a stool, and asked if they were his own. Palin said they were, and the officer remarked, "I believe they are the clothes that were lost from the cottage where the woman was murdered." Thereupon the accused explained that he had bought them "from a man," and on being asked what man, said, "I suppose the man they were looking for when

they stopped me on the Sunday morning in Croydon." The witness went about dressed as a tramp to get news of Palin, and a relative of his, named Chapman, ultimately brought him some information. The witness added, "I have often seen prisoner at Bromley. I met him in the High Street, Croydon, on the morning after the murder at about half-past seven, and he was carrying no bundle then."

John Baxter, inspector of the R Division, said that the prisoner arrived at Bromley police-station on the night of September 5. When the charge was read over to him, he said, "Beazley—I think I have heard that name before." On the day following the first magisterial examination Palin sent for the witness and said, "I slept at a public-house on the Godstone Road on the Friday night. I was there from 9 p.m. until between 8 and 9 a.m. next morning, and the landlady cooked me a steak for breakfast." The witness inquired which house it was, and he said he went down from Tatsfield to the three cross-roads, and he came to a house

SAW A MAN COMING FROM THE COTTAGE.

known as the Bell, opposite to which was a butcher's shop, where he bought some steak. The witness went to the place and found the Bell to be at Oxted, and five miles from the Beazley cottage. A person going by the foot-road from that cottage to Oxted would pass through the clover-field and by the oat-field where the mowers were.

Mary Ann Marsden was called to depose that the prisoner's grandmother lodged with her at Copthorne. Palin did not come there either before or after the murder, and they had not seen him for some years.

William King, a sergeant of R Division, proved that prisoner was in his charge at Bromley, on September 6, and that he told him that he had come up from Gloucestershire to a sign-post, where he had buried £3 before he was transported. He said that he had come up on purpose to get it, and that it was a post with a sign off, where there had formerly been an inn. He said that he had slept at the Bell, higher up the road, and that the landlady would remember him by an observation he had made respecting her not charging him for cooking the steak.

It will be seen that everything in the case turned on the point whether or no Palin had slept at the Bell. If he was there, as he said, from nine at night to nine the next morning, he obviously could not have committed the murder. But if it could be proved that he was not at the Bell at all before he took his breakfast there to be cooked, how would it go with him then? We shall see.

To continue the evidence, which now became of the utmost importance. Alfred Blaber, assistant to a butcher at Oxted, deposed that he remembered a young man purchasing some steak on the morning of August 25, and it was after eight o'clock. He could not identify the prisoner, and he could not say in what direction he came, but he went away towards the Bell, and the witness noticed that he was carrying a bundle.

Mrs. Susan Cockrell, landlady of the Bell, at Oxted, declared positively that no one lodged in her house on the night of August 24, and with this announcement the prisoner's case looked hopeless. She remembered a man, whom she believed to have been the prisoner, coming to her house about 8 a.m. on the morning of the 25th with some steak, which she prepared for him. Several other witnesses were examined with a view to contradict the prisoner's statements as to the purchase of the clothes and the places where he described himself as having been on the night of the crime and the morning after. Nearly all his assertions were proved to be false, and the case against him looked extremely black. He could easily enough have committed the murder at six, have robbed the cottage, and been seen by the mowers in the field at six-thirty, and yet have been at the Bell, at Oxted, at a quarter-past eight. That was the theory of the prosecution, and I am bound to say that it looks by far the most plausible and likely.

Mr. Denman, however, made what the "Times" refers to as "a very able speech." I have never been able to gather more of it than that he referred to the absence of blood upon the clothes of the prisoner, and that he deprecated attaching too much weight to the evidence of the mowers, who had seen Palin, as they believed, rush away from the cottage after the murder. The jury were, as I have said, a very long time deliberating upon their verdict, and some astonishment was expressed when the foreman announced that the decision arrived at was "Not guilty." Palin skipped nimbly from the box, and was out of the court in a twinkling. He disappeared from the neighbourhood within the next few days, and nothing more was ever heard, so far as I know, of the sensational murder at Codham.

Was he guilty? I wonder!

CHAPTER VI.

THE cruelty of the barbarian is manifested in almost every form of execution which was in vogue in the East in the early part of last century. We have described how the Japanese tortured their victims, and how the Chinese slew by inches those who had broken their laws. Now we will travel a little farther west, and see how the Siamese and the Hindoos were also imbued with the spirit of savagery, and, later, how the Persian, proud descendant of one of the most advanced races the ancient world knew, keeps up the tradition.

Closely allied to the Chinese by blood, it is only to be expected that the Siamese and Tonkinese, and, in fact, all the inhabitants of that corner of the world which for a better name we call Indo-China, should exhibit fiendish eccentricity when they had to take the life of a fellow-creature. The love of lingering deaths, the delight of gloating over the sufferings of a wretched mortal whose eyes are glazed with agony, and whose failing breath marks the approach of dissolution, seems to be inherent in the Mongol nature, and, though weakened, is still to be found in the folk allied to the Yellow Man. In Cochin China the condemned man knew that he might be forced to quit this world by one of many horrible routes. He might simply be beheaded, providing his offence was not great, and he was of little importance; he might be treated to the "thousand cuts," he might be starved, or he might be impaled.

We have dealt with the "thousand cuts" in the previous chapter, so we will now say a word or two concerning impaling as a means of inflicting the extreme penalty.

For the general credit of mankind, be it noted that impaling has never been a common means of executing criminals, but, at the same time, it must be remembered that it has been used at some time or other by almost every people. In early days it was natural enough to the warrior to run his enemy through with his spear, and when rulers were also active military leaders, it can readily be seen how it was that summary execution was often done by the offender being spitted on a spear. The transition from this to fastening the spear in the ground and casting the culprit on it is natural enough. Later on a sharpened stake took the place of the spear, and we have the apparatus for simple impalement. A spot outside the town was selected for the scene of execution; the condemned, bound and often drugged, was haled there by his guards, and then he was spitted on the stake and left to die. If he were fortunate, the stake touched some vital spot, and his agonies were short, but if he were not one of those whom the gods loved he lingered in unspeakable agony for hours. Death came at last, however, and then the hordes of prowling dogs which are to be found throughout the South of Europe and through all Asia on the outskirts of every village, came and ate the criminal's corpse.

Such was simple impalement, and my readers will agree with me that it was a horrible enough death to mete out to any human being. The Cochin Chinese, however, did not think that impalement in that form was severe enough, and, with devilish cunning, devised improvements on the method of procedure.

At first the site for the execution was chosen near a giant ant-heap. The victim was carefully spitted on the spike, the executioner seeing that as little injury as possible was done to the body. From the wound welled a thin stream of blood. This attracted the attention of the ants, and, before long, the inhabitants of the ant-heap swarmed out to partake of the feast provided for them by the bounty of man. The hot sun poured down on the dying criminal, the slightest movement brought untold torment, and all the while the hordes of insects, clustering round the wound, and biting at the raw edges of the flesh, added to the sufferings of the condemned. Hours, nay, sometimes days, might elapse ere unconsciousness supervened, every instant seeming an age, and an age of torture. From time to time the villagers or townsfolk would come out to see how the culprit was faring, and would laugh derisively at his fate. When they were gone the failing sight of the dying wretch could just make out the vultures which soared above him and his ears mark the whining of the hungry pariah dogs who prowled around, both birds and beasts waiting for life to be extinct before they commenced their gruesome meal of human flesh.

This form of impalement was tedious, and did not provide any active sufferings which the populace could gloat over, so the fertile minds of the semi-barbarians devised an even more atrocious mode of killing their offenders. Instead of the stake, a bundle of sharp spears was provided. The lances were driven into the ground, with their points upwards, at a distance of about a couple of inches apart. Thus they formed a bed of spear-heads. On to this the bound victim was thrown, and the populace stood round and laughed at the writhing of the poor creature who lay on that bed of torment. This death was still thought to be too humane in certain districts, and the bed was done away with. The executioner supplied himself with a sheaf of lances made of cane, with roughened edges, but with points like needles. The shafts of the weapons were very fine, hardly being thicker than the stem of an ordinary match. These horrid instruments were inserted under the skin of the condemned, and the points brought out some little distance farther on the same side, so that no vital spot was touched. When all the spears had been inserted the victim resembled a porcupine. To augment his suffering, then, the shafts were occasionally tweaked, so that the rough edges lacerated the flesh, causing exquisite pain. As the doomed man grew weaker from loss of blood he occasionally stumbled and fell, increasing his sufferings and evoking mocking cheers from the spectators. He was speedily set on his feet again and forced to stumble about till exhaustion overcame him, and at length he succumbed.

The Malays, a race bordering on Siam, were kinder to their condemned. True, at times, they starved them to death, but, as a rule, their executions were speedy. Our readers are familiar with the Malay "creese," or dagger, so often seen in museums and private collections, with its curious wavy blade, sharpened on both sides. Well, that

was, and is, the weapon of the executioner as well as of the fighting man. Frequently the soldier imbued the blade of his "creese" with some poisonous juice, so that the slightest scratch from its serpentine edge might be sufficient to cause death. The executioner, however, had no need to do this, for he made sure of his stroke being fatal.

On the left-hand side, at the base of the neck, and between the neck and the shoulder, behind the collar-bone, can be felt a hollow or depression. If you look at a skeleton you will see that there is a space there which leads into the cavity of the chest, with no bone intervening. The Malays know that passage well, for in battle they strive to wound their adversary there, and, of course, that point is guarded most carefully by the warriors. The bound convict, however, has no opportunity of guarding that approach to the heart and lungs. The doomed man is led outside the village, followed by the executioner, who from time to time fingers his "creese." The execution spot reached, farewells are said, and then the executioner creeps up behind his victim, and, with one deft blow drives his weapon down through the shoulder till its point reaches the heart. Like a stricken ox the criminal falls dead. The "creese" is withdrawn, and a gush of scarlet blood tells the spectators that all is over. It is a humane mode of slaying the condemned.

LINGERED IN UNSPEAKABLE AGONY FOR HOURS.

Across the Bay of Bengal we come to India, in our journey westwards, now practically entirely under British rule. Prior to the English conquest of the peninsula, however, some strange modes of execution found favour in the eyes of the Hindoos.

Crushing to death, perhaps, was the most favoured of all the Oriental modes of execution, though, of course, it could only be practised in the capitals where the rulers dwelt and kept elephants. Some holiday was generally selected for the judicial slaying of those who had been adjudged worthy of death. To appreciate the scene, one must be acquainted with the aspects of an Indian crowd.

Colour is everywhere. The men are clad for the most part in snow-white loin cloths, save those of very high caste, who have the borders of the "dhoti," or cloth, edged with purple silk; but the women, even the very poorest, wear gaudy clothes. Red, blue, green, orange, pink, every conceivable hue under the sun is mingled together under the blazing blue sky. The very yellow of the sandy soil, stirred up by countless mahogany-coloured feet, gives a note which is strange to the western eye. The turbans of the men are also of many colours, and the wealthy wear jewels in their head-dresses, as well as gorgeous ear-rings, which contrast strongly with the simple copper or silver ornaments of the poorer Hindoos. The legs, as well as the arms of the women are loaded with huge bangles of gold or silver, while some girls may be seen with enormous rings passed through their noses. Here and there may be noted an ascetic, or "fakir," his salmon-tinted cloth and ash-besmeared body standing out in strong relief against the parti-coloured mob around him. In this corner may be seen a few Jains, distinguished by the cloth which they wear over their mouths lest in breathing they should kill an insect and so lose their hope of heaven. One or two Mohammedans, distinguishable from the Hindoos by their black or stained beards, mix in the throng. The air is heavy with the strong, sickly smell of the marigold and the Indian jasmine, while from the town the wind comes laden with the aromatic smell of burning "gobar" (cakes of dried cow dung). Above all rises an almost indescribable din, for the Hindoos shout at each other at the tops of their voices, anything like modulated conversation being quite against the canons of good behaviour in a crowd. In and out through the mass of people pass pedlars, some selling water, declaring the while that they are of the Brahmin caste, others with slices of water melon, bananas, sweet limes, and sweetmeats of wonderful shapes and flavours. Then there are the vendors of "pan supari," or areca nut, wrapped in betel leaf, with catechu and other aromatics, which is dear to the heart of the Hindoos. These merchants do a brisk business, and on all sides may be seen swarthy faces munching and chewing the little bundles bought from the hawker's tray, and

ever and anon ejecting a stream of crimson fluid, regardless of where it falls.

Presently may be seen some Hindoos, dressed in tawdry uniforms, bearing long rods tipped with silver, and shouting at the tops of their voices. No one can distinguish what they are saying, but from the movement of the crowd it is obvious that they are clearing the way for some person of importance. A passage is made through the mob, and after several relays of these footmen have passed, a troop of native soldiery, fantastically dressed, and carrying huge curved swords, approaches. Behind them comes the rajah of the State, riding in a howdah perched on the back of a magnificent elephant and surrounded by a number of attendants bearing yak tails set in silver handles. The meanest article in use by the rajah is heavily encrusted with gold or silver, and precious stones seem to be sown broadcast over his apparel. On all sides the populace acclaim their ruler, using the extravagant expressions for which the East is famous. Following the royal elephant are several other beasts, but little less magnificently houselled, and bearing some of the important nobles of the court.

When all have taken up their places, some soldiers bring forward the guilty who have been sentenced by the judges to die. These poor wretches cast themselves on the ground, and with wailing voices beg for clemency from the rajah, calling him the "Son of Heaven," the "Incarnation of Brahma," the "Favourite of Siva," the "Beloved of Vishnu," and so forth, according to the particular deity worshipped by the ruler. All shout at once, while the fat Hindoo who governs the State looks at them for an instant and then goes on chatting with an ill-favoured Brahmin who sits beside him in the howdah.

The grovelling wretches on the ground continue their mournful plaint, but their bloated rajah pays no heed to them. At length he remembers that he is supposed to be doing justice, so he waves his hand and commands silence. Then, with an air of judicial gravity, he selects one or two and tells them that they are pardoned, without having the least idea for what they have been condemned, and intimates that execution must be done on the others.

A throng of women approach the royal elephant, and, flinging themselves on the ground, beseech the rajah to have pity. They are the relations of the condemned, and the wives of the unfortunate malefactors will be forced to live a life of the most cruel drudgery if their lords are slain. The unwieldy monarch listens to the babel of lamentations, and, desirous of appearing merciful, directs that another criminal, whom he selects at haphazard, shall be spared.

The women are then driven from the royal presence, and one of those doomed to die is brought into the open space before the rajah's elephant. Being a Hindoo, he takes his approaching death, now that he is convinced that he cannot obtain a respite, very much as a matter of course. He had to die sometime, why not now? The Hindoos are nothing if not philosophical.

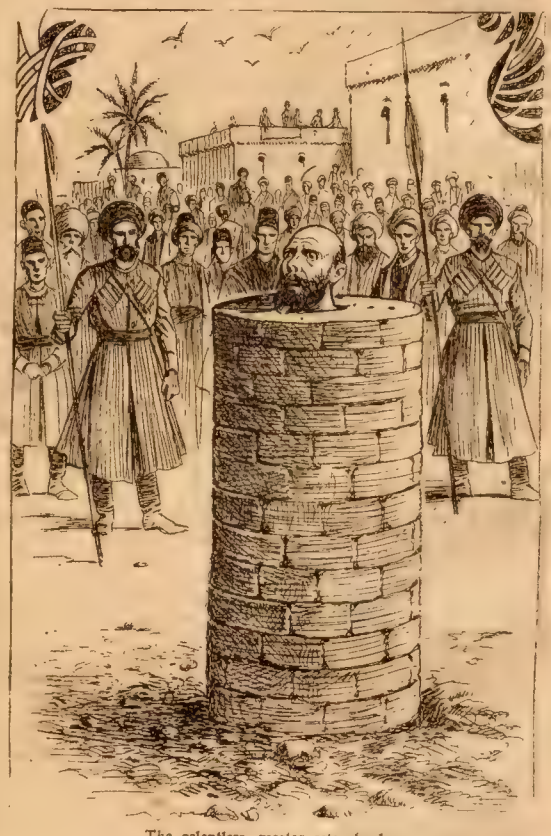
Calmly he spits out a mouthful of betel which he has been chewing, and asks if he may have a "biri" (native cigarette). His request is granted, and he coolly smokes the little leaf-wrapped cigarette, inhaling the fumes with deep breaths. His hands are then bound behind his back, and he is placed in the centre of the open space.

From behind the royal party comes a huge elephant, bearing no howdah nor housellings, but having a dark-skinned mahout, or driver, perched on its neck. The elephant is driven round in front of the rajah, and at a signal from the mahout drops on its fore knees and raises its trunk to salute the ruler. Then a dig on the forehead from the iron hook which the driver carries causes it to rise, and it shambles off round the open space. When directly behind the culprit, the mahout again taps his beast, and it turns towards the criminal and advances slowly. At last it reaches the doomed man. Again the cruel hook is brought down on the patient elephant's thick skull. The beast knows the signal well.

In an instant it has gripped the criminal with its trunk round his waist and raised him up on high. Then with a swish he hurls him on to the ground. The driver looks at the rajah, who is watching the execution with as much interest as he can arouse for anything. A signal is given, which the mahout conveys to the elephant with a tap, and the ponderous animal again advances. When the prostrate Hindoo is reached the great beast kicks him as if he was but a featherweight, hurling him some yards away. The natives looking on, breathless and gloating in the torments of the condemned, draw a breath as they hear the snap which tells of a broken bone. Again the elephant kicks the man, and yet again, each time breaking a bone, and driving the half-conscious Hindoo back to the spot on which he first stood.

There is a pause, while the mahout seeks further orders from his lord and master. They are speedily given. The elephant seizes the form at his feet and tenderly lays it out so that the head is resting on a stone. Then he raises his enormous foot above it and waits. Another signal, and down comes the great hoof, crushing the Hindoo's skull like an egg-shell and spattering the brains all around. "Shabash! Shabash!" shouts the crowd, applauding the elephant to please their ruler, while inwardly fearing that the day may come when they, too, may meet their ends beneath the animal's foot.

Another criminal is brought out and placed before the elephant executioner. The rajah likes variety, and by a sign signifies the same to the driver. In the twinkling of an eye the elephant has seized the condemned man and thrown him on the ground at his feet, face upwards. Then slowly, slowly, he lowers himself till his two great knees are on the wretched coolie's chest. There is a crunching sound as the whole of the breast collapses as if it were made of cardboard.



The relentless mortar sets slowly.

and a spurt of blood from the flesh which has burst under the strain. That death was rapid. Another coolie is kicked to death, and the last, to show the skill of the elephant, has his neck deftly broken by one wrench of the animal's trunk. The rajah expresses himself sorry that justice demands that he should take a life, fills his mouth with betel, and rides off to his home. The crowd melts away, and then from places where they have been hiding during the dreadful scene come the relatives of the slain to pick up the fragments and give them honourable sepulture. The great event of the day is over.

Other methods of execution there were in India, such as beheading by the sword and the administration of poison, but these were also to be found in other countries, and will be dealt with later. Strangling was also practised in the native States of Hindustan, under the name of executions, but it was really done in private to gratify spite or to clear the way for some ambitious rajah or noble.

In the land of the Lion and the Sun we find a cruel method of execution which, though now seldom resorted to,

has not yet been abolished by law, and one which certainly was made use of as lately as 1896. This is walling up alive, or, in the language of the country, "gatching." The preparations for this brutal mode of putting criminals to death are simple enough. The culprit is led outside the city to some desolate spot. He sees there a number of little monuments, and he recognises that his death is to be the most terrible known in Persia, for soon he, too, will be converted into a monument. A hole is dug in the ground, about a foot deep, and round this a little wall about a foot high has been built. The criminal is permitted to say farewell to his relations and is given a draught of sherbet, containing a little opium. His feet and hands are then bound, and he is lifted into the pillar, the little wall reaching about to his waist. The bricklayers then set to work, for it is early morning, and they know that if they do not hurry up they will have to work in the burning heat, and soon the pillar has been raised till it is within an inch or so of the doomed man's chin.

That done, buckets full of "chunam," a species of native cement, containing a lot of plaster of Paris, are brought, and their contents poured down inside the pillar, between the man and the surrounding wall. From time to time a little water is added to the cement, so that the mass may settle nicely round the malefactor. It does not take very long for the top of the pillar to be reached, and then the masons smooth off the summit neatly, making a hollow where the convict's chin comes, so that he cannot rest it on the plaster.

By now the sun has risen, and its burning rays are streaming down on the unhappy wight encased in his tomb while yet alive. To add to his misery, the criminal's fez, or sheepskin cap, is taken off, and he is left exposed to the full glare of the Persian day. Soldiers are left to guard the pillar, and the relatives and friends of the doomed man stand round or squat on the ground. From time to time they are allowed to give him a drink or to put a pipe between his lips.

The sun heats the bricks of his narrow prison, and the cement begins to set. At first only a gentle pressure is felt, but gradually that increases. Death has him in his powerful grip, but closes that grip slowly. The gentle pressure becomes a squeeze, the squeeze the iron hold of a vice. The condemned cannot draw a full breath, great beads of sweat stand on his brow. His limbs grow numb, and an indescribable pain creeps, oh, so slowly! upwards. The eyes protrude, the eyeballs seem glazed. The agony is intense, but the sufferer longs for it to increase rapidly that he may find rest, but the relentless mortar still sets slowly. Moments seem hours, hours are prolonged into ages. At last the mortar sets, and, with a gasp, the Persian malefactor is no more. Into the city go the relatives, escorted by the soldiers, who wish to prevent them from recovering the body.

In the night the prowling jackal, the rapacious vulture, and the kite share the dead man's head between them; in the morn the summit of the pillar is bare. A shovelful of cement on the top completes the structure, which for ages will stand as a warning to the evil-doer. "Gatching" is now reserved for very great criminals, lesser offenders being slain with a knife. The victim is led out into the market square for execution, but not knowing where he is to meet his fate. Hidden in some doorway, or behind some pillar, is the executioner, who, as the convict passes, springs out and with one slash cuts his throat. All is over in a moment. Later in the day the body is given to the relatives for burial, or thrown to the dogs that prowl around the outskirts of the city.

A Nice Ham.

SERJEANT SHEE was once cross-examining a witness who had a supreme contempt for aspirates.

"You are a linen-draper, I believe?" asked the serjeant.

"I ham, sir," was the modest reply.

"And," retorted the learned counsel, "a very nice, well-dressed ham you are!"

He Made the Most of it.

LORD COLERIDGE'S first brief after being called to the Bar was for the defence of a man named Watson, who was tried for murder at Exeter, the brief being handed to him from the Bench. He had travelled the Western Circuit for over four years without being able to secure a brief with which it was at all possible to lay the foundation of a successful practice, and the one in question was apparently all but hopeless.

The young barrister, however, talked and talked till one of the candles on the jury-box—it was before the days of gas—flickered for a moment and then went out, leaving the court in semi-darkness. Counsel stopped. The silence in court could almost be felt, and the scene, with its dark shadows, its grim faces, the red robe of the judge, and the pale face of the prisoner, was most striking. The usher brought in a fresh candle, and Coleridge continued his speech:

"Gentlemen of the Jury, you have a solemn duty, a very solemn duty, to discharge. The life of the prisoner at the Bar is in your hands. You can take it by a word, you can extinguish that life as the candle by your side was extinguished a moment ago. But it is not in your power—it is not in the power of any of us—of anyone in this court or out of it—to restore that life when once it is taken, as that light has been restored."

The tone in which he spoke these words, the action of the orator, and the cadence of his voice, with the inspiration of the scene and the hour, produced a marked effect. The jury returned a verdict of "Not Guilty," and Mr. Coleridge's fortune was made, as he was never without a brief afterwards.

Presence of Mind.

IN the year 1889, a Mrs. Kersten, the wife of a wealthy cloth merchant, who resided in West 38th Street, New York City, was in the house, with only one servant.

She was in her boudoir, laying aside articles of jewellery and placing them in their proper places in a bureau. Happening to raise her eyes to a mirror opposite, she caught the reflection therein of the figure of a man, curled up under a large centre table, but hidden from sight of any occupant of the room except what was afforded by the mirror's reflection.

With great presence of mind, she finished her occupation at the bureau, and, stepping to the bell, rang for the one servant in the house. When the woman appeared, she said, "Mary, I want you to run over to Mr. Schwabe's (a jeweller in Broadway), and say I wish he would let me have at once the diamonds he has been re-setting for me. They are the most costly I possess, and I am so uneasy at having them so long out of my possession. Tell him to send them by you right away, even if they are not finished. But, wait a minute; I'd better write a note to him." Seating herself coolly at the table, under which the man lay concealed, she wrote the note, which, as may be surmised, was not for diamonds, but detectives. The servant took the note, and, absolutely alone, Mrs. Kersten waited for help, with the burglar within arm's length of her.

In order not to arouse suspicion in his mind, she went about the room humming a popular air, and putting various things in their places. What her feelings must have been during this terrible suspense may be better imagined than described, as may also her relief when the ringing of the bell announced the return of the girl and the police.

The man was captured after a desperate struggle, and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment in Sing-Sing.

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ORDER FROM YOUR NEWSAGENT.

The Murder of Lord Mountmorres.

"First to the throng this valiant truth to tell,
Rebellion's art is never to rebel."
—LORD LYTTON.

THE year of grace one thousand eight hundred and eighty was an epoch-making period in the history of Ireland. It was, indeed, described by Erin's patriots as a year of history-making. It was the "business" year of Parnell and his adherents, and it was the year when his (Parnell's) fame reached its zenith. "We will make him King!" "He shall be at least President!" lustily interjected too-confident enthusiasts when their pet statesman harangued vast audiences on the subject of the day.

Outrage seemed to have an unchecked licence in this making of history, but it remains to this day very questionable whether there is any iota of legitimacy in the unwritten canons of any law to justify the heinous and cruel extermination of so unoffending a member of the community as the ill-starred Lord Mountmorres, who fell a victim to the treacherous bullets of an "unknown" assassin.

On Saturday afternoon, September 25, 1880, Lord Mountmorres was murdered at a place called Rusheen, within a mile of Clonbur, where the deceased nobleman resided. He had attended a meeting of the magistrates in the course of the day, at the Court-house, Clonbur, at which a resolution had been passed calling upon the Government to take coercive measures, and he left the town about eight o'clock in the evening. Half an hour afterwards his horse and carriage arrived at Ebor Hall, a mile distant, the mute harbingers of disaster. Search was made, and the inanimate form of the murdered peer was found at the side of the road in a pool of blood. He had received one rifle bullet in the head, which penetrated his skull, three in the neck, and two in the body. A lantern was found near where the body was lying, and a bottle of whiskey in the well of his carriage.

Some time previously the deceased had had a dispute with several of his tenantry, and obtained a number of eviction processes, which, however, it is recorded, he did not intend to carry into execution. He received several threatening letters, in one of which he was menaced with the fate of the Earl of Leitrim, and it was thought advisable to station a guard of constabulary at his residence, besides furnishing him with a personal escort

About four months previously the police were withdrawn, but soon afterwards it was proposed that officers should be specially stationed at Ebor Hall. His lordship refused, perhaps indiscreetly, to accept the offered protection, merely stipulating for an escort when he required it, but, nevertheless, he always went armed with a loaded revolver.

As an instance of the bitter animosity rankling in the breasts of the masses against their landlords, a sensational instance of gross savagery transpired in the evidence adduced in the coroner's court. The body was removed to a house between 200 and 300 yards from where it was lying. The inhospitable tenant of this house, one Flanagan, refused to admit the unfortunate nobleman's remains. There was an element of superstition in this act of negation, for Flanagan stoutly insisted upon it that if he admitted the body of Lord Mountmorres nothing belonging to him or his family would be alive that day twelve months. In spite of this inhuman and uncivilised conduct, Flanagan protested that there was no man he wished better to than Lord Mountmorres, but he could not admit him. In this strange resolve the man was supported by his wife and daughters, who rushed downstairs in their nightdresses, and they said that Lord Mountmorres, though not then dead, should not be brought in. They placed themselves in the doorway, so as to prevent his admission. Even the request that the nobleman's body should be placed in an outhouse was refused; there never was such an exemplification contradicting the axiom, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Right up to the final chapter the hostility of an ignorant set pursued its course. Two men who had driven the hearse and mourning coach were asked by one of the deceased's relatives to assist in placing the corpse in the coffin. They refused to do so, whereupon a car-driver expressed his willingness to assist, and, with the police, laid the body first in a zinc, then in an oak coffin.

Cong was, on Wednesday, the 29th September, 1880, the scene of considerable excitement in consequence of his lordship's funeral. As early as five o'clock in the morning a hearse and mourning coach arrived from Galway to remove the corpse from Ebor Hall to Dublin. Later on, tenants of

Found at the side of the road.

his lordship, with the people of the neighbourhood, proceeded to a fair held about four miles distant. From nine o'clock the road was lined at certain points by men of the labouring class. At Ebor Hall were the Hon. A. H. T. de Montmorency, brother of the deceased, the Hon. T. R. de Montmorency, and the widow and four children of the deceased. Some distressing incidents were observed. The two men who had driven the hearse and mourning-coach, as has already been stated, resolutely declined to place the body of the martyred peer in the coffin, and a scene of indescribable pain was the result. Without any reason being assigned, the men persisted in their resolve, and this did not put a period to the difficulty, for it was ascertained that it would not be advisable that the corpse should be taken through the fair, which, as previously mentioned, was being held on the same day. It was, therefore, suggested that another route to Galway should be taken; but in this again the obstinate drivers refused to acquiesce. They said they would go no other route than that by which they had come, and it was only on threats of personal violence that they suggested a compromise which would enable them to avoid the fair. The cortège, however, passed along smoothly and unhindered, and it was perhaps a satisfaction that the latent evil spirits of the crowd

found vent in the pleasures of the fair rather than in disturbing the calm and holy serenity of the environment of the grave.

The Rev. M. Mahaffey, chaplain of the parish, delivered a touching address at the graveside of the deceased peer, and we may be forgiven if we reproduce his reverent sentiments.

"Deceased," he said, "had died a victim to the fever passion of some of their misguided countrymen. Awful, indeed, is the responsibility of those who take it upon themselves to lay violent hands upon the life of a fellow-man in order to satisfy a grudge or to further the interests of a class to which they belong. Terrible is the crime of those who send their brother suddenly to his account. The wrong done to him whose remains are in the coffin is the greatest that man can do to man. In the minds of all there was a feeling of intense indignation, and an earnest desire that the wrong may be avenged by just and merited punishment. The state of Government that fails to act with vigour and decision shares the responsibility of the crime that its remissness produces. The murderer carries in his heart the sentence of his condemnation; he bears with him throughout the world the cankering misery of an accusing conscience, the undying memory of his awful deed. In the hour of sickness and death God pity him! And those hands are stained with his blood! The deed that caused this sorrow was one of a series of which some are past and some are yet to come. The murder," the preacher continued, "was not so much believed to be an act of revenge against his lordship as an act of intimidation against the class to which he belonged. Their countrymen were kind and generous, but their moral sense had become perverted, and they had learned to look with approval—nay, with admiration—on acts of violence and bloodshed. Of their political leaders, some applaud, some palliate, some regard with indifference these deeds of bloodshed, and there was certainly no attempt on their part to put an end to it. They had waited in vain for a protest against such deeds from their religious teachers, while their English rulers seemed to be unconscious of the duties they had undertaken. The hostile policy of English statesmen embittered divisions that would long since have healed of themselves. Their reliance was not on sovereigns or statesmen, but on God." The priest concluded by asking all to pray for their country.

In our opening remarks we referred to the history-making of the year 1880 in respect of Ireland. In synchrony with the cause of that overwhelmed race there was at the time the much-discussed problem of the Ottoman Empire, which engrossed the minds of statesmen in equal proportion. But it will be remembered how the hands of politicians were forced to deal with the concerns of the English public, reflected in the Irish disorders. The Ottoman Empire was at the time falling to pieces, and it was seen that its fall led to a proper resurrection of nationalities, instead of the fragments being allowed to become the prey of lawless freebooters or of aggressive tyrannies. But Ireland also was in a state of turmoil, which called for prompt removal, and it was acknowledged that the British Government had been playing the tyrant there for many generations, and was loth to apply to its neighbours the principles of political and social liberty of which we were so proud at home, and both

REFUSED TO ADMIT THE UNFORTUNATE NOBLEMAN'S REMAINS.

our honour and our interests required that some honest effort should be made once for all towards reducing the chronic disorder to order and promoting peace and progress instead of hatred and degradation.

Since then the political whirligig has been kept in action, but the remedial measures have only been too tardy. That the assassination of Lord Mountmorres was the direct outcome of agrarian disputes no one can presume to deny, and his sacrifice, as well as in the case of other practically unoffending compatriots, was an event that must for ever stand out boldly as a reproach to the fair fame of the noble race. And yet not to the race should the ignominy be ascribed, when the stealthy homicide—irresponsible, treacherous, and unreasoning—deals the death-blow and deprives the world of one who left it better for having lived in it.

When the last tears were shed over the untimely grave of Lord Mountmorres, there was an unwritten decree established which unalterably demanded retribution. This retribution forced itself upon the stricken conscience of the murderer, who, however, succeeded in eluding the less harrowing course of justice.

CAREY, A Cheshire Criminal.

How a Tramp committed a double murder for the sake of a small sum of money and a suit of clothes, and how he was captured and his guilt brought home to him.

"This is the bloodiest shame,
The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke,
That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage,
Presented to the tears of soft remorse."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King John," Act IV., Sc. 3.

ON a particularly fine spring morning in April of the year 1883 I happened to be in the interesting old town of Chester. I was spending a fortnight's holiday with some friends resident in the neighbourhood, and I was never tired of roaming the old Cestrian streets, exploring the quaint alleys and odd corners with which the town abounds, and pacing the pleasant Roodee, where the Chester Cup—even in its decline—still attracts thousands of lovers of the turf. On this glorious spring day my wanderings had no specific object that I know of. I was in an idle humour, and only anxious to pass the day, or that part of it which lay between a rather early breakfast and a somewhat late lunch. It fell out, however, that on this particular day I was to be present at a criminal trial for the first time in my life; and the occasion and the circumstances are firmly grafted in my memory.

I had been informed before leaving my friends' house that the Chester Spring Assizes were to commence that day, but my taste for criminology was dormant at that period, and I had not troubled to inquire if the various charges included anything very attractive or sensational. But a small crowd of more or less interested loiterers hung about the fine courthouse as, quite unpremeditatedly, I passed before it and took a casual glance at the rather pretentious building. While pausing I overheard the remarks of one or two of the bystanders, and learnt that a trial for murder was proceeding within, the circumstances of which crime were singularly brutal and atrocious. Some of the details—they were of a sordid yet shocking character—reached my ears, and a sudden wish to inspect a man presumed to be capable of such a hideous deed seized upon me and would not be dispelled. An overwhelming desire to witness this trial overpowered me, and I determined to obtain a place within the doubtless crowded court if it could in any way be managed. The master of the house where I was staying was a justice of the peace. I happened to have one of his visiting-cards in my breast-pocket, and I imagined that its production would facilitate my entrance to the court. Nor was I mistaken. The little piece of pasteboard proved a talisman that removed all difficulties and obliterated all obstacles. I was politely admitted by a stern-looking janitor, and a seat found for me in a quiet corner, from which I could see judge, witnesses, counsel, and prisoner, and attend to the evidence and the procedure of the trial in comfort and seclusion. The nature of this dreadful case will be shown in the appended narrative and a full history of the transaction given as I heard it from the lips of the counsel for the Crown that day. For the moment it suffices to say that an extraordinary impression was made upon my mind by the appearance of the prisoner.

There are, perhaps, some men born into this world upon whom the Creator seems to have left a distinctive mark, a sort of danger-signal to warn the human race that here there are capacities for such frightful crime as the mind recoils from imagining. On some men—they are happily few and far between—there is planted, clearly and unmistakably, the accursed brand of Cain. In the furtive eye, the cruel smile, the sensual lip, the low forehead, the brutal jaw, the murderer stands revealed. His propensities are written there plainly in the ferocious face. These are the criminals who slay with a light heart, the brutality of whose deeds is only equalled by the amazing stupidity which eventually brings them to the gallows. They are the savage, unthinking beasts of crime, who kill their fellow-men with as little compunction as the tiger does his prey. Of such a type—unreasoning, unreflective—was the man in the dock before me. He seemed a very animal. His cunning eyes glanced round and about him every now and then in cat-like fashion, almost as if he meditated some escape, some mad spring for the freedom he had forfeited. He was short and thick-set, and of powerful build. His lips were brutally sensual, and formed a curious perpetual pout. His hair was coarse and matted and of a peculiar neutral tint difficult to describe. The nose was broad and flat, the cheek-bones high, the chin round and denoting obstinacy. The whole face was an odd mixture of ferocity, low cunning, and inherent stupidity. He was dressed in rough and well-worn garments, and clutched a vile blue cap in his gnarled, discoloured hands. I had heard none of the evidence, I had formed no opinion of this man's guilt or innocence, but if ever I saw the face of a murderer I saw it then, as the low, crafty eyes momentarily met my own. A wild beast, gentlemen of the jury, a wild beast! Such was Patrick Carey.

* * * * * *

There is a small village in the county of Cheshire called Smallwood, which lies on the highroad between Knutsford and the Potteries. Here, then, resided some twenty years ago an old man, named Earlam, his habitation being a wretched cottage in a lonely and remote spot on the highway. Small, straggling, and inconvenient as was this building, it was used as a lodging-house for tramps and out-of-work labourers, though it was hard to see how it could be made to shelter more than two or three persons with any regard to comfort or even decency. But old Earlam was not particular as to the class of the lodgers he took in, nor were the latter at all fastidious as to the nature of their accommodation. A "doss" or a "kip" on the hard, bare boards of the cottage floor was almost a luxury to men whose nights were often spent in draughty, rat-haunted barns or beneath haystacks or cattle-shelters.

Was seen to emerge from the cottage.

Earlam was known in the district as "Old Tommy," and Mary Moran, who lived with him as a sort of housekeeper, as "Old Mary," and the couple were quite celebrities in their own way. The old man was penurious and saving, and it was common talk in the district round Smallwood that he had a "decent bit o' cash" stored away somewhere on his dilapidated premises. As a matter of fact, Earlam's savings—which did not amount to a very considerable sum—were kept in a box, which box was always to be seen and its contents guessed at in a little pantry which adjoined the long low-roofed kitchen.

To this miserable "hotel," this Savoy or Cecil for "Weary Willies" and "Tired Tims," there came on February 2, 1883, a lodger calling himself Patrick Carey, who was, not, I believe, altogether unknown to the police as "John White," under which name he had committed several small robberies at one time and another. Carey was a man of decidedly animal physiognomy, short and thick-set, and about thirty-three years of age. It was not necessary or expedient to inquire too closely into the nature of his profession or calling. He was, primarily, a tramp, and, secondly a beggar, and occasionally, when opportunity offered, a thief. In a few days he was to eclipse all his other achievements in the criminal line in a manner that shall be now related. Carey—by which name this desirable lodger was known at Old Tommy's—took up his abode at the cottage on February 2, and on the 9th he was left there alone with old Earlam and his housekeeper. At a quarter to twelve that morning the old man was seen hanging out clothes to dry, and was noticed to return into the cottage when Mary Moran came out to speak to him. Exactly at noon a passer-by heard faint groans issuing from the lodging-house, but this person does not seem to have thought it necessary to investigate the cause, and, like the gentleman in the Scriptures, passed by on the other side. Ten minutes after this anything but good Samaritan had passed on, Carey was seen to emerge from the cottage and to hurry down the road towards Congleton. He was carrying a bundle, and it was observed that he kept looking down at his boots as he went along, presumably nervous that blood-stains might be apparent upon them. He was soon out of sight, and as the murders were not discovered till three o'clock, he contrived to secure a fairly good start.

One of the lodgers returning to the cottage made the frightful discovery. Old Earlam lay in a narrow passage between the washhouse and the kitchen, and was quite dead. His skull had been battered in at the right temple, his jaw broken, and the wall and flooring were bespattered with his blood. Near the body was found a hammer with which the fearful deed had been done. The body of the old woman lay in the washhouse, and she was writhing about, her limbs convulsively working, and her features fearfully distorted in what seemed the very death-agony. She had been struck a tremendous blow on the head, which had fractured the skull, and, though she lingered for a few days—to the astonishment of the medical attendants—her death, sooner or later, was assured from the first. That these deeds of blood had been perpetrated for the sake of the few pounds hoarded up in the box in the pantry was established from the first, and suspicion was at once directed towards the man Carey, who had been left alone with the deceased. Some articles of clothing had also been stolen from the house, and as the suspected man was carrying a bundle when he hastily left the house, a search for him was immediately instituted. The police found little difficulty in tracing his movements. Many persons came forward to say that they had encountered a man resembling Carey on the road, and he was eventually traced to Manchester, where he was found to be spending money freely amongst some low women there. In the big cotton town lived a woman named Murphy, with whom the suspected man cohabited when he was not engaged on one of his tramping expeditions. It was ascertained that the suit which had been taken from Earlam's house, and which belonged to a lodger there, named Sampey, had been pawned by this woman at Manchester, at the request of Carey. This suit had been wrapped in a newspaper by its owner, and when an examination of Earlam's premises was made the paper was found to be blood-stained. Carey was easily found, drinking at a public-house, and given into custody. He made some slight show of resistance, and declared his innocence, but after a short struggle the handcuffs were placed upon him, and he was taken before a magistrate, and charged with the double crime.

LAY IN THE PASSAGE, QUITE DEAD.

The trial of Carey came on at the Chester Spring Assizes, on April 12, 1883, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, the case for the Crown being conducted by Mr. Marshall and Mr. J. Eldon Bankes and Mr. Colt Williams appearing to defend the prisoner, who pleaded "Not guilty."

The first witness called was Edward Sampey, who identified a suit of clothes pledged by Carey at Manchester as his property. He stated that he went to work at 6.30 a.m. on February 9, leaving the prisoner in bed, and the two deceased in the house alive and well. He returned a little after three o'clock and found that the front door leading direct into the kitchen was locked, and he went round to the wash-house door, which was partially open. Looking in, the witness saw the body of the woman Moran lying on the floor close to the stairs in a deep pool of blood. He went to the smithy, giving the alarm, and returned to the house with several people, amongst whom were two men named Gorton and Wood. They all entered the house, and found the body of Earlam lying on the floor in the manner described. The witness's box upstairs had been broken open and his clothes removed. Both the deceased were old people and rather feeble, whilst Mary Moran had the additional infliction of total blindness. Samuel Carter, a tailor, identified the suit of clothes produced as one he had made for the last witness.

Lavinia Shannon came forward to identify the prisoner as having lodged a week at Earlam's, and she added that he had never been heard to threaten the old people, and was looked upon as quite a harmless individual.

Isaac Jones, describing himself as an umbrella-maker, deposed that he left the prisoner sitting near the fireplace on the morning of the murders, and that on his return—about 4.30—he found that Earlam was dead and Mary Moran dying. John Slack, a labourer, corroborated, and said that the hammer with which the double atrocity had been committed, belonged to him, and was kept in the pantry.

Eugene Gorton was the man who heard groans as he passed the cottage about noon on February 9, and he admitted that he took no steps to investigate the cause. John Broad related how he passed the house in a cart about the same time, and how he saw the prisoner, whom he identified, through the window.

James Austin, a wheelwright, encountered Carey as the latter was hurrying along the road towards Congleton. The man seemed excited, and kept on examining his boots and the bottoms of his trousers.

William Booth, a constable in the Cheshire police force, also saw the accused man on the Congleton Road. It was about ten minutes to one when he met him. Carey was walking fast, and was carrying a parcel or bundle under his left arm.

Police-constable Oldham was the first official called to the house, and he stated that Earlam's body was almost cold when he felt it. There was a good deal of blood on the floor and walls. He went upstairs and found a box, which was open and empty, except for a newspaper, blood-stained, wet, and torn in two. He also discovered the hammer (produced), which had stains of blood on the head and haft. The place was covered with blood, and resembled a shambles. He found a broken jug full of blood and water, and the woman's clothes were quite saturated.

Mary Murphy, a hawker, living at Crown Street, Chester Street, Manchester, gave important evidence. She stated that she had known the prisoner for some time, and that she met him on Sunday, February 11, in Miller's Lane, and went and had some beer with him. They afterwards took lodgings together with a woman named Bennett in Chester Street, and stayed there till the Monday. On that day between twelve and one o'clock they went to the Crown and Shovel public-house, and the barman handed over a bundle, which Carey had given him to mind on Saturday. They then returned to their lodging, and the prisoner opened the bundle, which contained a black-ribbed coat, vest, and trousers wrapped in a Paisley handkerchief. Carey declared that they cost four pounds, and he wanted them pawned so that he might buy a working suit instead. She took the suit to a pawnbroker, and obtained a loan of 12s., which she handed over to the prisoner, who went to Ancoats and bought a pair of trousers and a sleeved waistcoat for 19s. 6d. That night they went to another lodging in Hanover Street, and remained there till the Thursday evening. The prisoner seemed restless, and proposed a change of abode, so they went that night to Angel Street, and on Friday removed to a house in Crown Lane. That day Carey purchased a coat in Deansgate for 15s. 6d., and on Saturday they went to lodge at the house of a man named Holden, and stayed till Saturday February 24, when the prisoner was arrested.

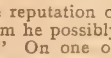
On Monday, February 26, after she had been before the magistrate, she was passing his cell in the Manchester Town Hall, when the prisoner called to her and asked her if she had heard of anything. She said, "No," and he then asked, "Have they heard about them clothes?" She said, "Yes. I told them about them last night," and Carey said emphatically, "Then I'm done!"

Alfred Hall, manager of the Crown and Shovel, related how the prisoner left a bundle with him behind the bar on the Saturday between eleven and twelve o'clock, and how he returned on the Monday with the woman Murphy and took it away. Charles Frost, barman, confirmed. Ernest Blaney, manager to a pawnbroker in Roll Street, identified the suit of clothes belonging to Sampey as having been pledged with him by the woman Murphy, and he said that he delivered them over to the police. Joseph Jackson, a detective-sergeant, arrested the prisoner, who showed some resistance at first and said, "I know nothing about it." Witness searched him and found £1 17s. 8½d. in his possession.

Police-superintendent Hindley, of Middlewich, received the prisoner from the Manchester authorities, also his clothing and the suit belonging to Sampey. Charles Latham, a surgeon, of Sandbach, stated that he visited Earlam's cottage on February 9, at 5.30 p.m., and found the old man lying dead. He had been dead four or five hours. The woman was lying coiled up on a sofa, and was still bleeding from her wounds, and, though she was then alive, she died on February 16. He examined Earlam's body, and found that the "right side of the head was one complete smash," the temporal bone being completely broken up and a number of pieces forced into the brain. The cheek-bone and upper and lower jawbones were broken, and all the injuries were inflicted by the hammer used with tremendous force. In his opinion, only one blow had been struck. The whole of the left side of the woman's face was a complete bruise, and there were three fractures on the head. She never regained consciousness.

The evidence was conclusive, and the case for the Crown seemed completely established. But an attempt at defence had to be made, however forlorn appeared the prisoner's prospects, and an endeavour was made by his counsel to throw doubt on his identity. But the stolen suit of clothes could not be explained away, and, after the learned judge had summed up as impartially as the circumstances would permit, the jury returned into court, after a very brief deliberation, with a verdict of guilty. He had only been tried for the murder of Earlam. He was sentenced to death, and heard the dread penalty recited without a visible tremor.

Carey was hanged at Chester on May 8, 1883, Marwood being the executioner. He showed much firmness—if it was not indifference—at the last, and walked calmly to the scaffold, having, however, acknowledged the justice of the sentence and confessed his guilt.



"Just Then."

JUSTICE PAGE had the reputation of being fond of condemning every prisoner whom he possibly could hang, and was called "The hanging judge." On one occasion Mr. Crowle, a barrister celebrated for his puns, was on circuit, and being asked by a friend if the judge was not just behind them, at once wittily replied, "I don't know, but I'm sure he never was just before."

Highwayman and Judge.

CHIEF JUSTICE POPHAM, whom Lord Campbell describes as a consummate lawyer, who depreciated all contemporaries, and was accustomed to sneer at the "book-learning" of Francis Bacon, had in his younger days been a very wild young fellow. We are told that he applied himself but little to the study of the law, kept profligate company, and several times "took a purse with them"—in other words, became a highwayman. His wife considered her and his condition, and at last prevailed on him to lead another and a better life, and to stick to the study of the law, which, upon her importunity, he did, being then about thirty years old. He asked his wife to provide an excellent entertainment for his comrades on his taking leave of them, and after that day studied very hard and profited exceedingly. He was a strong, stout man, and could endure to sit at it day and night; he became eminent in his calling, had a very large and lucrative practice, and was finally called to be a serjeant and a judge. He was notorious as a "hanging judge," and not only was he keen to convict in cases prosecuted by the Government, but also in ordinary larcenies; and, above all, in highway robberies there was little chance of an acquittal before him.

THE MURDER OF MIRANDA.

"My past! I am its miserable slave."
—W. P. WILLIS, "Lelia."

IN the early part of the last century there resided in one of the remoter districts of Philadelphia a well-to-do family of the name of Wood. The father was an Englishman, who had emigrated from his native country in youth, possessed of a small fortune, and owning several distinguished relations in the land of his birth.

The reason for his leaving his native shores thus early in life, and his precise object in journeying to a distant, partially civilised, and politically hostile continent has never been satisfactorily determined. Conjecture has been busy on several occasions; theories have been propounded, only to be found untenable by reasonable beings—theories and conjecture caused by the tragic circumstances evolved out of the man's sojourn in America—but the unknown and propelling forces which compelled Roland Wood to flee from his home in England and embrace as an asylum the wastes of Philadelphia will here, we imagine, be explained—if rather by suggestion than proof—for the first time, and the mystery which still hangs about his early movements in some part unravelled.

When first Roland set foot on the alien land he was a tall, handsome youth, somewhat slight in build, but graceful in person. His countenance was intellectual, the forehead high, the eyes large and lustrous, and the whole was pervaded by a tinge of bitterness and melancholy which suggested rather the poet and the dreamer than the resourceful adventurer.

He was not a man who easily admitted strangers into the confidences of friendship, or who invited such confidences from others, and he was, therefore, a lonely, and seemed to be an unhappy, man. He interested himself in several industries which prospered, and before long his slender fortune had swollen into more pretentious dimensions

His acquaintances, as we have said, were few, and amongst these was a young orphan girl, who lived with some friends in Boston, at which town Roland Wood was then quartered by the necessities of his business.

The beautiful orphan attracted Roland's regard, a regard which did not take long to ripen into love, and this affection, it was easy to see, was reciprocated. He proposed to the girl, was accepted, and shortly afterwards the pair were quietly married at a neighbouring church. It was soon after this that the following conversation took place between Roland and his wife.

"What, my dear," he said one day, "would you most like to do if I were able to give you a free choice?"

"Ah! My dearest wish would not be a very great one."

"Well, what is it?"

"To see England."

Roland started and frowned.

"England! You surprise me!"

"Why should it surprise you, husband? I want to go to the country of Queen Elizabeth. I want to see all the old, glorious places of romance. We have none here; our country is too young."

"Ah, you would be disappointed!"

"Anyhow, I should like to go. I look forward, Roland, to the time when you will have no further need of business, when we shall both be able to sail to England and live there always."

Roland began to pace the room. His brows were contracted, and a look almost of pain illumined his melancholy features.

"That can never be!" said he suddenly.

"Never be!"

"No. I shall never tread English soil again."

"Your own dear country!"

"My own dear country, but little dear to me. I shall, God help me, never visit its accursed shores again. Dismiss your idea of visiting it, wife, as a dream."

"But you alarm me, husband. Something must have happened—something awful—to cause you thus to hate your native land."

"Something—did happen."

"What? Oh, tell me all about it!"

Roland Wood strode over to his wife.

"Never ask me such a question again. Never seek to drag the past from its miserable grave. I am—what I am. Seek to know no more."

He strode, deeply agitated, from the apartment, leaving his wife confused, wondering, and frightened; but so fierce was the expression of his countenance whilst he spoke, and so harsh his accents, that she never again referred to a topic of conversation which it was plain to observe caused him deep mental agony. She thought much on the subject herself—thought, feared, wept, and conjectured—but never openly again did she seek, to borrow Roland's words, "to drag from its miserable grave" the dark, mysterious past.

The young people for some time experienced uninterrupted felicity. Their temperaments were congenial, their tastes simple, and their fortune competent. And after two years their happiness was crowned by the birth of a daughter, who for some fanciful reason was named Miranda. We must pay her the attention of detail, for she it is who is fated to be the heroine of this tragedy.

We will pass over the days of her childhood and describe her as a girl of sixteen, at which age she first becomes important to our story.

She was tall and somewhat slender, with a small, pink-and-white face, eyes like black violets, night-black hair, and a mouth of exquisite scarlet. The name of Miranda, fanciful, childish, and fairy-like, suited her admirably. She was rather in appearance a nymph of the woods than a daughter of man, suggesting in her beautiful person something elusive, unsubstantial, and not of common mortality.

She had, however, an affectionate disposition, and nothing delighted her so much as to sit by her father's knee and listen to some tale of old romance or talk of poetry and the like to her gentle mother.

But the even tenor of this happy family's life was soon to be rudely broken; the quiet, the homely ties of comfort, the peace of the household's bosom, all were to be torn, dishevelled, and engulfed in the storm and stress of awful tragedy.

One summer's evening in the year 1839, when Roland Wood was seated in his rose-garden, Miranda by his side, one of the servants came to him to say that a strange man was waiting in the house to see him.

"A strange man! What is he like?" said Roland, who nourished an unaccountable dislike for all strangers.

"He looks a poor man, sir, not very respectable, if I may say so."

"What name did he give?" said Roland, rising with ill-concealed chagrin from his chair.

"Quinsome; but he said you would not know his name."

"Quite right. I never heard it before in my life."

Roland Wood left the garden and walked into the house. In the dining-room he met an undersized little man, dressed very shabbily, who jumped up from his chair on Mr. Wood's entrance, and bowed with a smile that was half a smirk.

"Mr. Quinsome?" inquired Roland.

"At your service, Mr. Wood."

"Sit down, sir. And what may be the nature of your business?"

"It is not my business. I am the bearer of a letter from an English friend."

Roland turned deadly pale.

"His name?"

"His name? Oh, you know his name very well. Mr. Theodore Peak."

Roland sank into a chair.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "he has found me out!"

"Mr. Peak said as you would be very pleased to hear

from him. And so you are, ain't you, Mr. Wood. He! he! he!"

The man Quinsome burst out laughing and chuckling. He pulled out a letter from the breast of his coat and thrust it into Roland's hand.

Roland read the missive slowly, twice over. Quinsome took snuff, and watched the expression of his companion's features. Suddenly Roland sprang up from his chair and tore the letter to atoms.

"Well, Mr. Quinsome, you have my answer," said he, with a bitter smile.

The fellow looked astonished; he stumbled to his feet without a word and groped for his hat.

"Your answer?" he stammered.

"My answer is that I tear his letter to shreds and defy him!"

"Hoighty-toighty!"

Roland opened the door.

"I wish you good day, Mr. Quinsome," said he.

"Good day—good-day, Mr. Wood. Mr. Theodore Peak, I see, will have to visit you himself."

He darted a cunning look from under his eyebrows at Roland, and, with another bow, left the house. When he had gone, all the proud and defiant self-possession which had been so conspicuous in Roland's manner whilst confronting the stranger vanished. The man went back to the dining-room, closed the door, and tossed off a strong glass of brandy. He was shivering all over like one suffering from ague. He covered his face with his hands, and sat for some time in silent meditation.

That night at dinner he seemed sad and preoccupied.

"Wife," said he suddenly, towards the close of the meal, "I am thinking of leaving here."

"Leaving here! What can you mean?" cried Mrs. Wood and Miranda in chorus.

"I am tired of the place."

"Tired of our home?"

"Yes, tired. You once said, wife, that you would like to visit England."

"Yes, and you replied, Roland, nothing could tempt you there again!"

"I have altered my mind. I propose a trip to England."

Miranda clapped her hands.

"Oh, that would be lovely, papa! Fancy seeing England!"

Mrs. Wood said nothing. Her husband's demeanour troubled her. She could not understand his sudden wish to journey to a land which he never heard named without repugnance and ill-temper. Her woman's instinct told her that something was amiss with her husband. The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of the servant.

"Please, sir," said he to Mr. Wood, "Mr. Quinsome has called again, and wishes to speak with you for a moment."

"What!" cried Miranda, "that strange little man that called this evening?"

Roland said nothing. He left the room, shut the door behind him, and went out.

Quinsome was standing in the hall, and Roland motioned him to a side room.

"I am sorry to trouble you again, Mr. Wood," said the little man, with a chuckle, "but I've come this time with a message, a verbal message, which can't be torn up. He! he! he!"

"Well, what is it?" said Roland sternly, ignoring the jocular strain of Quinsome's remarks.

"Mr. Theodore Peak sends his compliments to you, says that your reply to his letter has amused him very much, and wishes you to know that he will be with you to-morrow morning."

Roland did not speak for a moment. His face was perfectly livid, and his lips twitched.

Presently he spoke, in a cold, matter-of-fact voice:

"Anything else?"

"Nothing."

"Then I wish you good night."

"Good night, Mr. Wood, good night. I'm sure I'm sorry to trouble you, very sorry indeed."

Quinsome once again bowed himself out.

That night Mrs. Wood was alarmed because her husband did not have a minute's sleep.

In the morning Miranda referred again to the English journey project.

"No, it is too late; I shall not go," answered her father absent-mindedly, and the girl went away, wondering at the strange turn in his wishes.

Soon afterwards two men rode up to the house on horseback. One dismounted and knocked at the door.

"Is this Mr. Roland Wood's house?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"Then tell him Mr. Theodore Peak wishes to see him."

The stranger was shown into the dining-room, and Roland, pale, haggard, and twitching with nervousness, followed him. The two were closeted together for three hours. Then Roland came out, looking ten years older, if possible, than when he had gone into the interview. He told the servants to prepare a bedroom, and informed his wife that Mr. Peak, an old friend of his in England, had come to spend a few nights with them. Then he took Mrs. Woods and Miranda and introduced them to the stranger.

Mr. Theodore Peak was an extraordinary-looking personage. He was very thin, pale-faced, with great masses of red hair. His eyes were deep-sunken, and were of a peculiarly uncertain colour, sometimes appearing grey, and at others green. He was a person that at once commanded attention and interest.

Mrs. Wood and her daughter, who were rather startled at thus suddenly having a visitor thrust upon them, acknowledged that Mr. Peak had persuasive manners, but were for some time a little uncomfortable and uneasy in his presence.

This was partly because Roland seemed afraid of him, waited on him, watched him furtively, and agreed with everything he said.

The next morning another surprise was added to the list of startling announcements with which Roland had already afflicted his household. He was going away on secret and important business to Boston. Mr. Peak would remain where he was, the guest of Mrs. Wood and Miranda.

The docile wife did not remonstrate with her husband on his seeming lack of confidence in herself and his daughter. She tried to hide her misgivings, and, when kissing him adieu, wished him every success in his unknown enterprise.

Whilst Roland was away, Theodore Peak spent most of his time in the company of Miranda. He was never tired of talking to the girl, listening to her singing, and playing for her himself, on which latter occasions he proved himself an accomplished, and even a brilliant musician.

At first Miranda did not seem to take much pleasure in his society, but gradually she fell under the man's strange influence. Every day saw the friendship ripen, until the two became almost inseparable.

At this time Roland Wood returned as suddenly as he had departed.

He at once sought an interview in private with Theodore Peak.

"Well, Roland, have you been successful?"

"More than I could possibly have expected."

"I congratulate you."

"I curse myself!"

"Ah! that is foolish!"

"Maybe, but I cannot help it. Here are the notes. Count them."

Peak thrust the packet into his coat.

"No need to count them. I trust you implicitly, because you dare not cheat me," said he, with a scornful smile.

Roland did not reply for a minute.

"Well, now that this miserable transaction is over, I suppose you have no further desire to remain here?"

Peak smiled again.

"You want to get rid of me, eh?"

"Certainly. I hope to God never to see your face again on this earth!"

Peak did not answer. His silence alarmed Roland.

"I suppose there is no further reason for your stopping here, is there?"

"Suppose there is——"

"Oh, heavens!" cried Roland, covering his face with his hands, "will this torture never end? I have done your bidding. What more can you require of me? Speak, answer me, fiend that you are!"

The strange man, who exercised such an unaccountable influence over the actions of Roland Wood, burst into a fit of laughter.

"I require but one thing more of you," he said.

"And that is——?"

"Your daughter."

Roland reeled as if shot.

"Mighty God! Are you mad?"

"No. I love your daughter."

"You love—devil in human form—you talk of love!"

"Yes; strange, is it not? Nevertheless, I demand your daughter. You dare not disobey."

Roland's eyes were protruding from his head. His face was contorted as with a terrible agony.

"Devil!" he cried. "I defy you! Do your worst.

Hang me if you will, but may God strike me dead this instant if I give my child to you. Nay, I will murder her first!"

"You defy me. Think! Can you afford to? Think again, my fine fellow!"

Roland did not speak. His breath came and went in short, thick pants, as though he were half suffocated. Peak caught him by the arm and whispered in his ear.

"Do you remember a certain night in England—the wood—the awful cry in the night?"

Roland shuddered.

"Spare me! Spare me!" he cried.

"Do you remember the cold white face——?"

"Enough, enough; it was your doing!"

"My doing! Fool!—idiot!—your conscience knows who did it."

"You drove me to it," faltered Ronald, trembling.

"I like that. Who will believe that?—the judge or the jury, eh? Don't be a fool, and don't provoke a man who can and *will* have his way."

"I know it. She, purity and loveliness itself, could love only the pure and the true."

"Very well. Suppose I were to tell you that Miranda not only loves me, but loves me with her whole heart; suppose I was to tell you that Miranda would rather marry me, although she has hardly known me three weeks, than any other man on the face of the earth—what then?"

"I should say you were a liar."

"We shall see."

"What do you mean?"

"Send for Miranda here."

"For Miranda?"

"Certainly; and question her with your own lips."

Half-dazed with fear and wonderment, Roland stumbled to the door and called for his daughter. The lovely girl ran to him with a smile. Peak shut the door behind her.

"Miranda, my darling," said Roland, "my friend Mr. Peak has made me a confession. He loves you. Were you aware of this?"

The girl looked up with a radiant blush.

LEVELLED IT AT HIS DAUGHTER'S HEAD AND FIRED.

"What mean you?"

"If you do not agree to Miranda becoming mine, I shall see you hanged, and then marry her. That is quite simple and plain, I hope."

Roland drew himself up, white and quivering, but no longer cowed. Something of his old manliness came back to him, and he gazed upon his adversary with a proud, unfaltering eye. Peak was surprised. He had never seen Roland Wood like this before.

"I know well," said Roland, "what power you have in your hand. Do your worst. You shall not marry my daughter."

"But if she wishes it?"

"Wish to marry you! My little Miranda! Are you mad?"

"You think she dislikes me?"

"Can a dove mate with the snake?"

"A truce to these compliments. I repeat, you think Miranda dislikes me?"

"I do."

"You think she could never love me?"

"Yes, papa, I knew it."

"You knew it?"

"Yes, papa."

Theodore Peak smiled.

Roland began again.

"Do you like him?"

"No, papa."

Roland turned on Peak with a scornful gleam of triumph in his eyes. Peak was still smiling.

"Miranda," said the strange man, "you have told your father you do not like me. Is that true?"

"Yes, perfectly true."

"Why do you not like me?"

"Because I love you."

The words came from her without a falter. With a half stifled exclamation Roland staggered back.

"Child! child!" he cried, "for God's sake think of what you are saying! You cannot love this man!"

"But I do, papa. I love him with all my heart. I am sorry if you are not pleased, papa."

"Scoundrel! devil!" thundered Roland to Peak. "You have bewitched my girl!"

"Ask her."

"What has made you think you love this creature, Miranda?"

"I can't say. I only know I do love him, and that I should die without him."

Theodore put out his arms, and the girl ran to him and hid her face in his bosom. He raised her head and covered her face with kisses.

Roland seemed turned to stone. When he did speak, it was in a cold, hard voice, devoid of any emotion.

"You know, Miranda," said he, "that I am your father?"

"Yes."

"And that you owe me obedience?"

"Yes."

"Very well. I order you to leave this room now, and never speak to that wretch again!"

The girl looked dazed and bewildered.

"Father, I can't."

"Can't!"

"No, father, I can't."

"Why not? Why will you disobey me?"

"Because—because he is my husband."

Roland uttered a cry of anguish. He stared, with a look of mad frenzy, first at one and then at the other.

"It is quite true," said Theodore Peak calmly, holding Miranda in his arms; "we were married this morning before you returned."

"Married—married—doomed—dead!" the father muttered to himself incoherently.

"See, papa," said Miranda, and holding up her hand displayed a wedding-ring.

"It is true, then—terribly true!" said Roland.

"Won't you bless me, papa?"

"Yes, come to me, child, for your wedding blessing."

"Stop!" screamed Theodore, in sudden terror.

It was too late. In a moment's flash Roland whipped a pistol out of his pocket, levelled it at his daughter's head, and fired. With a sickening sound the bullet crashed into the brain, and lifeless she fell to the ground. The blood ran out from her dead face, and began to dribble on to the carpet. Roland stood smiling with the smoking weapon still in his hand. A crowd was in the room, the distracted mother and all the servants. The neighbours began to pour into the house, attracted by the report and the women's screams. In the excitement, Theodore Peak slipped away. Two men laid their hands on Roland.

"We arrest you for murder," said they.

"Yes, yes, I did it, I murdered her. There she lies, dead—quite dead. God be thanked!"

That was all he said. He dropped the weapon and went quietly away with the officers of the law. He was tried, found guilty, and condemned to death. Peak was not present at the trial; he was sought for, but eluded all attempts at discovery. When he was waiting in gaol for the fulfilment of his sentence, Roland Wood was asked why, if he had had such a horror of Miranda marrying Peak, he had not shot him instead of his daughter.

The wretched prisoner shuddered at the suggestion.

"You don't know," he whispered. "I was afraid to. I am afraid of him even now."

The terrible secret that must have linked the men together in the unknowable past was never satisfactorily unravelled. It was by many thought that Wood had in his youth murdered someone in England, in which crime Peak must have played an important part. Perhaps Wood was merely the instrument of the other man's intention. On the scaffold the unhappy wretch bore himself bravely. As he faced the executioner he said:

"I murdered her. I saved her from him. Oh, thank God!"

The Young Idea.

COUNSEL for the defence (referring to witness, an undersized urchin of eleven): "How can this child be expected to know the nature of an oath?"

Witness (unexpectedly): "G'yarn! You ain't 'eard my father swear!"

MOUSTACHE.

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DAINTY NOVELS

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Wine Merchant's Law.

CHIEF JUSTICE BUSHE, the eminent Irish judge, once ordered some wine from a French merchant, who sent the liquor in six barrels. These were, unfortunately, consumed in the Custom House fire, in Dublin, and the merchant wrote to condole with the Chief Justice on the loss to the public, but more particularly on the loss of the wine, which, he said, he found was by law at the purchaser's risk. Lord Bushe replied very courteously to this epistle, and offered, as some consolation, the assurance that by law the wine until delivered at the house of the purchaser, was at the risk of the vendor.

Saved by a "Miracle."

A SOLDIER in the town of Silesia, being suspected of stealing the offerings of the faithful to the celebrated image of a wonder-working Virgin, he was watched, and, when searched, two silver hearts were found in his pocket. He was accordingly haled before a magistrate, imprisoned, tried, and sentenced to death as a sacrilegious robber. At the trial, he stoutly denied having stolen anything, and asserted that the Virgin herself, in compassion for his poverty, ordered him to take these gifts from her shrine. The sentence was, in due course, laid before Frederick the Great, who was puzzled at the novelty of the defence, and immediately consulted several priests as to whether a miracle like this was possible according to their ideas of religion. The priests answered unanimously that though the circumstance was very extraordinary, it was not by any means absolutely impossible. Whereupon the King wrote as follows on the sentence:

"The prisoner cannot be put to death, because he positively denies the charge, and the divines of his religion declare that the miracle alleged is not impossible. Therefore, let him be discharged, but be at the same time strictly cautioned, under pain of death, that he is to receive no more presents from the Virgin Mary or any saint whatsoever.—FREDERICK."

The Rhyming Executors.

AN eminent Provost of Dundee, named Robert Dickson, left by his will the sum of one guinea to any person who would compose an epitaph for his tomb, and his three executors were directed to pay that sum. These gentlemen held a meeting for the purpose of discussing the matter, and after some deliberation came to the conclusion that they might contrive to compose the epitaph between them, and divide the guinea in equal shares, each man being restricted to contribute one line only. The three lines, after much study, were perfected as follow:

"Here lies Dickson—Provost of Dundee;
Here lies Dickson—here lies he.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

The last line shows a lamentable want of poetic skill, as it does not rhyme; but the writer of another epitaph in the same churchyard got over a similar difficulty with much ingenuity, but little skill; thus:

"Here lies the body of John Watson;
Read not this with your hats on.
For-why? He was the Provost of Dundee.
Hallelujah! Hallelujee!"

REPLIES TO QUERIES

THE CORONER.—We will endeavour to reply in a week or two.

ORTON.—You are confusing the murder of Mrs. Squires and her daughter at Hoxton with the murder of Mrs. Samuels in Burton Crescent. 1872 and 1879.

YOUNGMAN (Taunton).—You can get De Quincey's "Murder as one of the Fine Arts" at any library of any pretensions. Our version, though, is quite correct. The little girl was found unharmed.

A READER OF F. C. (Dinas).—Dear! Dear! We thought everyone was familiar with that. Charles Peace was executed at Armley, near Leeds, on February 25, 1879, for the murder of Mr. Arthur Dyson. We really cannot answer queries by post, but are always pleased to hear from such a constant reader as yourself.

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